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Exploring Privilege through the creation and Live/Digital Performance of an Alter Ego

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Exploring Privilege through the Creation and Live/Digital Performance of an Alter Ego

BY

GEMMA NICOLE CHATWIN

A thesis submitted to Plymouth University in partial fulfillment for the degree of

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of ResM Theatre and Performance has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Sub-Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at Plymouth University has not formed part of any other degree either at Plymouth University or at another establishment.

A programme of advanced study was undertaken, which included taught modules including MAPP 500 – Researching Performance, MARE 500 – Research in the Arts and Humanities and PDAP701 – Introduction to Teaching and Learning. Additionally, during semester abroad at the University of Windsor, the following modules were taken: Introduction to Acting 1, Stage Management, Theatre from the 20th Century to Present Day and Canadian Theatre History.

Relevant seminars and conferences were regularly attended at which work was often presented.

Research presentations during this programme of study include:

- Humanities Research Group 2015 'How to Create an Alter Ego' University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada.
- Pep Symposium January 2016 'Creating an Alter Ego' Plymouth University
- The Jam April 2016 'Creating an Alter Ego: Finding the Hyphen' University of Reading
- Pep Talk May 2016 'Gemella Live' Plymouth University
- Pep Talk May 2017 'The Performance and Costuming of Alter Ego's' Plymouth University
- DRHA 2017 The *Gemella Live: Stream 2.0* Plymouth University

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ABSTRACT

Exploring Privilege through the Creation and Live/Digital Performance of an Alter Ego

GEMMA CHATWIN

Through the creation of my own alter ego, called Gemella, this Practice-as-Research project interrogates the relationship between ‘self’ and ‘ego’, and how this relationship is performed on social media sites such as YouTube, Instagram and Twitter. Using psychoanalytic theory, it considers how concepts such as the ‘shadow’ and ‘mask’ can work alongside creative performance strategies. Grounded in the experiences of my teenage years living in an expat community in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, the thesis explores concepts such as ‘privilege’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’ – underpinned by scholars such as Jen Harvie, Ulrich Beck and Peggy McIntosh – and how these can be negotiated to create ‘resistant’ performance. It pays particular attention to the initial stages of creating an alter ego with external presentation and costuming playing a major role. Considering the costuming choices of well-known alter egos such as Tammy WhyNot (Lois Weaver) and Miranda Sings (Colleen Ballinger), it can be noted how costumes can aid both personal and aesthetic transformation as a ‘symbolic signifier’. Moreover, the way an alter ego operates on a ‘continuum’ from acting to non-acting is explored further through digital presence. The thesis includes reflection on and documentation of formative practice research including photography, vlogs, google chats and gifs. The thesis will also include a summative live/digital performance outcome called *Gemella Live: Stream 2.0*.

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Introduction

Through the creation of my own alter ego, called Gemella, this Practice-as-Research project interrogates the relationship between ‘self’ and ‘ego’, and how this relationship is performed on social media sites such as; YouTube, Instagram and Twitter. Using Psychoanalytic Theory, it considers how concepts such as the ‘Shadow’ and ‘Mask’ work alongside creative performance strategies. Grounded in the experiences of my teenage years living in an expat community in Vietnam, the thesis explores concepts including ‘unearned privilege’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’ and how these can be critiqued in performance through a focus on online celebrity culture. It pays particular attention to the initial stages of creating an alter ego with external presentation and costuming playing a major role. Considering the costuming choices of well-known alter egos such as Tammy WhyNot (Lois Weaver) and Miranda Sings (Colleen Ballinger), it can be noted how costumes can aid both personal and aesthetic transformation as a ‘symbolic signifier’. Through a discussion of the practice of video blogging (V’logging), the thesis also explores ‘online avatar’ and the relationship between an ‘alter ego’ and an ‘internet ego’. It pays particular attention to YouTube stars, Sprinkle of Glitter (Louise Pentland) and Zoella (Zoe Sugg) in order to inform an understanding of my own practice. Moreover, the thesis considers the way an alter ego operates on a ‘continuum’ from acting to non-acting, especially through the ‘connectivity’ of digital presence.

The name Gemella was given to me by one of my teachers, Senora Schlei, when I was at high school in Ho Chi Minh City. As discussed further in Chapter One,

she called me Gemella when I was not acting ‘like myself’. In this project, I additionally drew on my memories of joining my mother on luncheons with groups of other expatriate women in Vietnam. Many of these women had become accustomed to a privileged lifestyle; some had arrived recently, whereas others were the ‘originals’ who formed a group of friends that arrived in Vietnam ten years earlier. Many of these women did not work in Vietnam and were simply ‘ladies of leisure’ who filled their time with coffee mornings, luncheons, shopping, and organizing the next charity social. Gemella’s personality grew from the various conversations that I had with these women about money, travel and the latest technology. A form of hierarchy appeared between them, and it often seemed like a battle to see who could out spend the other, or have a better holiday planned. This experience made me think about what my life may have become had I not opted to return to Britain for university in 2011.

Acknowledging Gemella as a derivation of my expatriate upbringing warranted the need to understand the correlations between Gemella and the term alter ego. To do so I must firstly outline my starting definition of an alter ego. Originating from the Latin phrase ‘other self’, dictionary definitions have a tendency to suggest that an alter ego is a ‘person’s secondary or alternative personality’ (Oxford Dictionary, 2017: online). Within performance practice many artists such as, Colleen Ballinger, Shon Dale-Jones, Lynn Hershman, Andy Kaufman and Lois Weaver are known for depicting their own alter egos throughout their body of work. However, I could find no scholarly literature about the performance of alter egos in a general sense, including how this may specifically connect to an alternative or secondary personality. This may also be due to it being a term that is related to and overlaps with interpretations of character and persona.

John M. Doris (2002) suggests that ‘to attribute a character or personality trait is to say, among other things, that someone is disposed to behave a certain way in a

certain eliciting conditions’ and that traits displayed through a character are to identify ‘what people do and how they live’ (Doris, 2002: 15). For example,

Peter didn’t mingle at the party because he’s shy, and Sandra succeeds in her work because she is diligent. Traits also follow in prediction: Peggy will join in because she’s impulsive, and Brian will forget our meeting because he’s absentminded. So too for those rarefied traits called virtues. James stood his ground because he is brave and Katherine will not over indulge because she is temperate. (Doris, 2002: 15)

Such consideration of personality traits and virtues allows us to understand and interact with one another. To compare the dictionary definition of alter ego to Doris’ notion of character and personality traits, it could be suggested that although an alter ego and character differ in significant ways, they are made up of the same components. In *Drama/ Theatre/ Performance* (2004), Shepherd and Wallis explain that to create character assumes that the work of individual/actors is to consider how to produce a ‘characterisation’ of a fictional person. Meaning, ‘[...] they are responsible for and the discovery of the ‘motivation’ for it’s behaviour, leading to an outcome in which, thanks to their efforts, the written text ‘comes alive’ (2004: 179). Shepherd and Wallis refer to the definition’s earliest form, related back to ancient Greek writer, Theophrastus. His Greek model of characterisation was translated into English in the late sixteenth, early seventeenth century, highlighting that ‘characters’ were ‘personifications of moral vices and virtues’. Naturally, ‘characters’ became popular as ‘prose distillations of topical social types’ for audiences to relate too. Within the 18th century a ‘character’ was still understood under a similar premise, to correspond to a series of attributes that make up a person (Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 179).

Within current practice and discourses of western theatre, ‘character’ is entwined through impressions of ‘[...] roundedness, depth and interiority’ (Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 179). The concept has become a process of creating to correspond to social construction that is often based around standard assumptions.

Shepherd and Wallis refer to Andrew Gurr (1970) who suggests that, plays produced throughout the early seventeenth century opted to use another formality to portray ‘fictional individuals’ this being, ‘dramatis personae’ used to describe ‘the activity of presenting the persons of the drama’ (Gurr in Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 179). The term person – or rather the Latin form, persona – is explained by Philip Auslander, as a ‘performed presence’ (Auslander, 2004: 6) that is not a character (in usual sense) but, is also not equivalent to the performer’s ‘real’ identity. In his article, ‘Performance Analysis and Popular Music: A Manifesto’ (2004) he uses Simon Frith’s understanding of the term ‘persona’ to depict how characterisation can be observed in musicians being themselves on stage. Frith proposes three different elements that can be seen within their performances/concerts. These are ‘the real person’ (the performer as human being), ‘the performance persona’ (star personality or image) and ‘the character’ (song personality) (Frith in Auslander, 2004: 6). Auslander acknowledges that Frith uses the term persona only with reference to artists who ‘took themselves and their bodies as the objects or sites of narrative and feeling’ (Frith, 1999: 205). Auslander expands upon Frith’s three stages of performance persona using the example of Kelly Clarkson, the 2002 winner of *American Idol*, a popular singing contest. Auslander states that Kelly Clarkson,

[...] sang a duet on television with country singer Reba McEntyre, they performed a song in which they played the roles of women competing for the affection of the same man. In addition to these characters, however, they also portrayed musical personae of the seasoned veteran singer and her young acolyte (and perhaps future competitor); these personae were delineated through the same performance as the characters in the song but were independent of those characters –the singers could have performed their personae regardless of what song they chose. (Auslander, 2004: 6)

It is here that Auslander highlights that the presence of both performers as ‘real’ could also be visualized through Clarkson’s ‘televised’ comment regarding how she had

always been a huge fan of McIntyre and therefore had opted to choose her as her duet partner for the finale of the show. Regardless of this being a true or false statement, the personal experience was another layer added to the performance, overlapping with the two women's current musician status, one a 'seasoned veteran' and the other a 'young up-and-comer' as well as the characters of 'romantic rivals' that they are portraying through the song. Auslander notes that these levels of personification are not always as easy to distinguish. He explains that 'the demarcation line between real person and persona is always ambiguous in performance' (Auslander, 2004: 7). He refers to Richard Schechner (1981) who points out, performance is always a matter of the performer's not being himself but also not not being himself' (Schechner in Auslander, 2004: 7). He uses the logic of a double negative to highlight how many pop singers create names that are a type of personae/mask they give to themselves when performing, later to an audience these are regarded as 'real people'.

The need to look within, or rather behind the mask, relates closely to Stanislavsky (1863-1938). Joseph Roach explains that his name became associated with "affective memory" a tradition formed by Diderot. Affective memory, suggests that the actors must recover past experiences and emotions that could be considered within any given role. Roach states that both Diderot's and Stanislavsky's work attended to a problem surrounding acting – in particular, 'how to produce passion to order even while sustaining spontaneity' (Roach in Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 181). For Stanislavsky, his approach to understanding character focused on the interrelation between mind and body. His system for training actors considered 'the bond between body and soul is indivisible [...] [I]n every physical act there is a psychological element and a physical one in every psychological act' (Roach in Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 181). His training, 'psycho-technique' suggests that an actor can 'reach the spiritual life of a role reflexively through its physical life' (Roach in Shepherd and Wallis, 2004:181). He

suggests that through the conscious we can reach the subconscious, this is reached when the actors training ‘concentrates on techniques to stimulate subconscious reflex, the concept of character, even though it is something to be “built”, becomes thoroughly organic and privatised’ (Roach in Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 182). Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) disagreed with the need for an actor to portray a character in a ‘natural’ manner. Instead, he focused on the actor changing ‘human nature’ attempting to ‘shed light on the human being at that point where he seems capable of being changed by society intervention’ (Brecht, 1965: 235). Unlike Stanislavsky’s approach where the bond focused on mind and body, Brecht encouraged the actor ‘not to tidy away the inconsistencies in a character’ but to ‘demonstrate its contradiction its instability and capacity for change’ (Brecht in Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 182). Although he acknowledges that ‘empathy and self-identification’ with a character can be useful as a rehearsal tool, he notes it is one approach of observation. However, he highlights that ‘the task is not to falsify coherence the coherence of the character is in fact shown by the way in which its individual qualities contradict one another’ (Brecht in Shepherd and Wallis, 2004: 182).

Shepherd and Wallis have provided understandings of scholarship surrounding the terms ‘character’, ‘persona’ and ‘mask’ proposed by Stanislavsky and Brecht. Their main techniques for presenting or rather achieving character act as the basis for many acting regimes. Now evaluating the performative values of their techniques, I believe that both scholars require the actor to present a certain form of embodiment, be this through the actor using the body and mind or to highlight difference through inconsistencies. It is the definition of persona that I believe best depicts the differentiation between the real person and the character/persona. Auslander’s assertion of a persona being a performed presence that differs from the ‘real person’ coincides effectively with Frith’s three levels of personification. Although it’s primary

focus was created to consider the performative values of the individual within the music industry. Frith's approach to understanding the creation of character and persona, has allowed me to reconsider how the definition of all three entities (character, mask, persona) have helped me work towards what can be considered as an alter ego within performance. However, this has also highlighted that although the alter ego can be related loosely to the terms they should not be considered synonymously.

Therefore, my starting point in creating and understanding an alter ego focuses on moments where I feel I am presenting personality traits that are not core features of the self I usually choose to present. For example, these traits may correspond to a desire to present more confidence, arrogance or even portray opinions that would not usually be identified with oneself. At the start of this research project, I did not feel that Gemella corresponded to all elements of a character or persona nor did I believe she was a secondary or alternative personality. My intentions throughout the first chapter of this thesis are to explore how these might work together, and to understand how an alter ego might work in practice.

The main research method driving this project is practical exploration, which has three main purposes: to learn about creating and developing an alter ego; to understand more about how to perform an alter ego for a range of audiences; and finally, is to highlight what sort of techniques are available to someone who wants to critique their entitlement or upbringing through performance or through social media as an alter ego. The following table sums up the practice undertaken for this project and identifies the way it builds and develops.

Title of practice	Date(s)	Form of practice	Purpose of practice
Gemma vs Gemella	November 2014	Photography experiment	Creating/developing alter ego
Gemella Live: Stream	February 2015	Performance – live (University of Plymouth) and online (Google Hangout)	Creating/developing and Performing alter ego
Gem[ella]	April - November 2015	Photography experiment	Creating/developing alter ego
4* Hell	October 2015 (at the University of Windsor, Ontario Canada)	V'log (online)	Performing alter ego
#PASSPORTPROBS	October 2015 (at the University of Windsor, Ontario Canada)	V'log (online)	Performing and Critiquing (through) alter ego
The Gemella Gif Series	January– April 2016	Gifs (online)	Performing alter ego
Gemella Live: Stream 2	12th September 2017 (at the DRHA conference)	Performance – live (University of Plymouth) and online (Google Hangout)	Performing and Critiquing (through) alter ego

Table 1: Summary of Practice

During the second year of my part time ResM, I spent a term on exchange at the University of Windsor in Canada (1st September 2015 – 19th December 2015). This experience progressed my project in a number of ways. An acting class helped me to further develop Gemella through exercises that involved devising a monologue and working with an object that signified meaning to us. Performing with a suitcase helped me to symbolize my journey of living overseas (both on exchange and as an expat in Vietnam), and aided my process of embodying Gemella. We were advised to keep a journal to document and reflect on our experiences within this class, and this enabled me to document my process creatively and theoretically. Finally, I took a Canadian History class that opened up the idea of being ‘between’ two identities or cultures. Applying this theorisation of Canadian identity politics to making and embodying an alter ego (which is discussed in Chapter Two), helped me to understand and explain

this experience and while considering these ideas, I made the two Gemella V'Logs while in Windsor (which is a city on the border with Detroit in the USA).

Overall, this project follows a Practice-as-Research methodological approach devised by Robin Nelson (2006). Nelson's model (see Figure 1) is 'mixed mode' and 'dynamic'. A variety of theoretical models have informed and helped me to reflect upon my practice throughout my process and my findings are reflected both in the writing within this thesis as well as my final thesis performance.

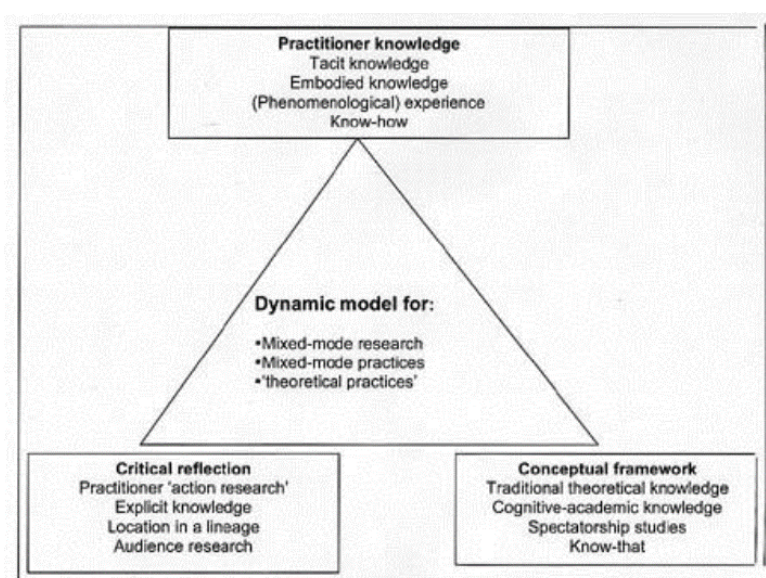


Figure 1 Robin Nelson's (2006) Model for Practice-as-Research

The three points of the diagram focus on the critical ways of knowing and these help me to shape the questions I aim to answer through this research.

- 1) 'Practitioner Knowledge' focuses on the 'Know-how' of my practice and revolves around my experience and embodied knowledge, for example through the making of gifs, V'logs and livestreams. The main research questions for this project related to 'know how' are:
 - i. What are the most significant features when performing an alter ego?
 - ii. How might I harness social media to create an alter ego?

2) 'Critical Reflection' relies on 'Knowing what' or 'Knowing-about' my particular area of practical study and how the understanding that I have gained through practice can move my work forward and contribute to wider knowledge of these practices.

This also relies upon critical analysis of other artists and the positioning of my practice within a lineage. I have opted to consider Tammy WhyNot and Miranda Sings for their performative values and Zoella and Sprinkle of Glitter due to their fame related to Video blogging on a social media platform. The main research questions for this project related to 'knowing about' practice are:

- iii. How might costume be used in creating, developing and performing an alter ego?
- iv. How do performers use or relate personal experience or memory in the creation of an alter ego?

3) 'Conceptual Framework' considers the 'Know-that'. The main theoretical framework used in this thesis underpinning my practice are psychoanalytic theories of personality. Moreover, theories of 'privilege' act as a framework to enable a deeper understanding of what I hope my alter ego is able to critique. The main research questions for this project related to 'know that' are:

- i. How might an alter ego be used to critique privilege through performance?
- ii. How might psychoanalytic theory be used to develop further understanding of how alter egos are performed in digital contexts?

A main performative strategy that relates closely to my conceptual framework is resistance within performance. One of the ways Gemella will be responding both to

the role of women in society as well as acknowledging and negotiating her own privilege as a white women is by attempting to create ‘resistant’ performance. Elaine Aston (1999) suggests that the ‘resisting agent or performer [...] functions as an ideological, cultural and theatrical demonstrator – empowered as the feminist critic (rather than female victim) of the “master” text’ (Aston, 1999: 83). In this instance, the ‘master text’ that Gemella will be attempting to resist concentrates on her critique on the expatriate community she has been a part of for many years. As a performance strategy, my role as the performer will focus on how Gemella can represent women in this particular society and her choice to go against the grain of stereotyping to resist the influence of how the community has been shaped.

These three perspectives work together to form the final version of this thesis. Using Nelson’s diagram as a base for the methodological framework of my thesis, my chapters each reflect the elements of ‘knowing-that’, ‘knowing-how’ and ‘knowing-about’ in the process of discovery as I begin to consider the formation of Gemella.

Chapter One, ‘Defining the Alter Ego through Practice’, outlines the key concept (or ‘knowing that’) that has contributed to my practice, the psychoanalytic theory of personality. Developed by Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, this explores the correlation between the conscious and unconscious state of mind. I aim to demonstrate how this relates to my relationship with my alter ego, Gemella, paying particular attention to the effects of an expatriate upbringing, and in particular an International School mission statement, which seemed to support and foster expectations of ‘white privilege’. The chapter also discusses other alter egos portrayed by Lois Weaver (Tammy WhyNot) and Colleen Ballinger (Miranda Sings), both of whom demonstrate how alter egos can be manifested through performance practice (that is, ‘knowing about’). In terms of ‘know-how’ the chapter discusses two practical

experiments, ‘Gemma vs Gemella’ and ‘Gem [ella]’, where I aim to identify the role of symbolic signifiers in costuming when developing an alter ego.

Chapter Two, ‘The Alter Ego through Live/Digital Presence’, considers how to further the embodiment of an alter ego on digital platforms. The critical ‘know-that’ revolves around Jose Van Dijck’s and Sherry Turkle’s understanding of the ‘well connected user’ on social media platforms such as, Instagram and YouTube. This informs my critical reflection on ‘know-how’, focusing on how adjusting an unconscious mask within the digital era might form the basis for an ‘online avatar’. Through a discussion of YouTube stars, Sprinkle of Glitter (Louise Pentland) and Zoella (Zoe Sugg), I will discuss how the Ego can be analysed in video blogging (V’logging), enabling the critical evaluation of several elements of my performance practice as Gemella which revolve around online presence. Finally, this thesis also includes the practical outcome, *Gemella Live: Stream 2.0*, which was performed after the written element is submitted (and has been documented and included as an Appendix in the final version of the thesis).

Chapter 1

Defining the Alter Ego through Practice

In this chapter I aim to discuss key concepts and theory that have contributed to my practice, in particular, the ‘Psychoanalytic Theory of Personality’ explained by Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung. Exploring the correlation between the conscious and unconscious, I aim to demonstrate how this can relate to my alter ego, Gemella. Focusing on the relationship between ‘Gemma’ and ‘Gemella’, I will examine Freud’s and Jung’s ideas of the ‘shadow’ or ‘mask’ as phenomena which are integrated by the individual consciousness into society. In order to do this, I will explore critical areas of practice that will demonstrate ideas of what an alter ego is, and more importantly, how my alter ego has manifested through performance practice. By the end of this chapter I will have provided a summary of the process of creation of Gemella, paying particular attention to the effects of an expatriate upbringing. I will review the notion of ‘cosmopolitanism’ and its correlation with privilege. Furthermore, the exploration of other alter egos portrayed by Lois Weaver (Tammy WhyNot) and Colleen Ballinger (Miranda Sings) will reinforce and evaluate the way in which the theory of the ‘shadow’ can be implemented through work of performance artists. The discovery of costuming of other alter egos, will lend itself for strong reflection on my practice as Gemella. Both pieces of work, ‘Gemma vs Gemella’ and ‘Gem [ella]’ aim to identify the need for symbolic signifiers with regards to costuming and identification within personalities.

Defining an alter ego through psychoanalytic theory

A significant number of sources dealing with the concept of alter egos have a tendency to suggest that an alter ego poses as one's 'secondary persona' or 'alternative self.' (Oxford dictionary, 2017: online). Some even go as far to propose that an 'alter ego' is someone that holds distinctly different attributes to the person who embodies it, yet they still look like them. (Oxford dictionary, 2017: online) However, most of the work that has been published on this topic is rather general. Therefore, in order to aid a deeper understanding of this topic, this section of the chapter will focus on the psychoanalytic theory of personality, proposed by Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, and how it can contribute to how and why the formation of alter egos have become an integrated role of society.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian neurologist, is best known for his conceptualisation of the psyche and his extensively developed techniques and theories of psychoanalysis. Freud expressed interest in the behaviour of people, and he would document the way patients spoke about themselves or their behaviour. He often noted that certain aspirations and real motives were not always expressed to ourselves or to others but hidden within us. Freud defines this as 'The Unconscious Mind', between the period of 1900 and 1905; Freud began to make connections between the conscious and unconscious by using a hypothetical diagram of an iceberg to explain the three stages of the mind. As Saul McLeod explains, the visible surface of the iceberg is the 'consciousness, which consists of those thoughts that are the focus of our attention' (McLeod, 2015: online). The second area of 'consciousness' that affects the mind is the 'preconscious' this sits at water level when applied to the iceberg diagram. This aspect of the mind 'consists of all which can be retrieved from memory' (McLeod, 2015). Lastly, beneath the water lies the unconscious that McLeod comments Freud

labelled as the 'most significant region'. It is here that most of the 'processes' lie 'that are the real cause of most behaviour' (McLeod, 2015).

In later adaptations of his theory of the unconscious mind, Freud focused his attention on making a more concentrated model of the way the mind worked and in particular, the complexities that surround human behaviour and personality traits. Labelling this 'The Physical Apparatus,' he identifies three stages of the mind as the Ego, the Id and the Superego. In his book *An Outline of Psycho-analysis* (1940), Freud explains that the study of individual development acknowledges that the Id is 'the oldest of these psychical provinces or agencies' (Freud, 1940: 138). He considers the Id as:

[...] everything that is inherited, that is present at birth, that is laid down in the constitution- above all, therefore, the instincts, which originate from the somatic organization and which find a first psychical expression here [in the id] in forms unknown to us. (Freud, 1940: 138)

Freud suggests that the Id is something presented to us from birth, challenging our 'influence of the real external world around us' (Freud, 1940: 138). Based heavily upon instinct, Freud considers that the Id has undergone development. He suggested that prior to birth and the early stages of childhood one's Id has always been 'present,' ensuring that all of one's needs are met acting as an 'intermediary between the id and the external world' (Freud, 1940: 138). Alongside the formation of the Id is the Ego. Freud explains that this works beside the Id and 'has the task of self-preservation' (Freud, 1940: 138). He implies that the Ego functions in all three states of mind (the conscious, unconscious and preconscious), often negotiating how to successfully display the Id's instincts within 'reality'. As Freud states 'the Ego strives after pleasure and seeks to avoid unpleasure' (Freud, 1940: 139).

Lastly, the Superego is formed upon ‘special agency’ in which the ‘parental influence is prolonged’ (Freud, 1940: 139). The relationship between the Ego and Superego is ‘traced back to the attitude to its parents’ (Freud, 1940: 139) and the Superego takes into account many of the parental attributes. This influence considers ‘the personalities of the actual parents but also the family, racial and national traditions handed on through them, as well as the demands of the immediate social *milieu* which they represent’ (Freud, 1940: 139). As the individual progresses through life, its development of the Superego will also be shaped by society ‘ideals’ and role models. This formation of the psyche implies that the mind attempts to shape its conscious and unconscious thoughts subjectively.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), a Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist, was an early supporter of Sigmund Freud who agreed that psychoanalytic theory of personalities is centered on the unconscious. However, opposing Freud’s theories, Jung proposed a new ‘psychoanalytic theory’ that considers a collective unconscious as a series of ‘archetypes.’ Jung proposed four archetypes, ‘Shadow, Anima, the Animus, and the Persona’ which express different aspects of the individual conscious and ‘have the most frequent and the most disturbing influence on the ego’ (Jung, 1983: 91).

Jung describes the shadow as the “negative” side of personality, which ‘might be said to be responsible for those slips of tongue and other “mistakes” [...] mistakes which reveal feelings and motives which the conscious self disowns’ (Jung, 1983: 87). Jung states that as we disown this aspect of our conscious, we ‘project’ this shadow onto others, as a way to dismiss the traits that we actually possess ourselves such as, ‘greed, intolerance and disregard for others’ (Jung, 1983: 87). Jung suggests that we approach the shadow as the ‘moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality’ (Jung, 1983: 91). He poses that for our unconscious shadow to become valid we must

acknowledge that they can become part of our conscious. This involves accepting that we all hold dark aspects of our personalities, prompting our conscious to resist the ‘inferiorities’ of emotion (Jung, 1983: 91).

Jung also explores the archetype of the ‘persona,’ which he considers as a type of ‘mask.’ Unlike the shadow, the persona is a more complex ‘system of relations between individual consciousness and society’ (Jung 1983: 94). He explains that the ‘mask’ is formulated for two reasons: firstly, as a way to ensure a ‘definite impression upon others’ (Jung, 1983: 94). And secondly, as a way to disguise ‘the true nature of the individual’ (Jung, 1983: 94). Jung expresses that our concept of individual is made up of a series of ideals. Therefore, society would expect nothing less than for an individual ‘to play the part that is assigned to him as perfectly as possible’ (Jung, 1983: 94). He states that the individual must always ‘play the role of a person in a flawless manner’ (Jung, 1983: 94). Upon successful modelling of the ‘suitable’ persona, a form of ‘self-sacrifice [...] drives the ego straight to the identification with the persona’ (Jung, 1983: 95) or mask and individuals honestly believe that their true ‘self’ is actually the mask that was designed by society. There are some cases, of course, where an individual struggles to fully adapt to the set ideals of society and then an ‘artificial personality’ emerges as a form of obligation to meet the standards of becoming a ‘mask.’ Hence for these individuals, what goes on behind the mask is considered as a ‘private life’ (Jung, 1983: 94).

Although Freud’s proposition of ‘the Id’ and Jung’s ‘the Shadow,’ hold different approaches to the way each understand the unconscious and conscious mind, they both acknowledge a form of ‘survival instinct.’ Ultimately, this is where I see the emergence of the alter ego. It is the premise of this chapter that the ‘Shadow’ or ‘Id’ create the alter ego as an instinct to adapt to modern society, especially due to a culture that is now becoming increasingly digitalized. As Jung highlights, for our unconscious

shadow to become ‘valid’ we need to acknowledge that the alter ego can become a part of our conscious. It is this that I believe to be the most crucial process in formulating an alter ego. It involves accepting that we all hold dark aspects of our personalities, prompting our conscious to resist the ‘inferiorities’ of emotion (Jung 1983: 91).

Why Gemella?

As mentioned in the introduction of my thesis, Gemella was based on a ‘nickname’ given to me by my high school Spanish Teacher. She would often greet this presence in the class, ‘Bienvenida Gemella’ (meaning ‘Welcome Gemella’) at the time I saw the hilarity of another ‘person’ being present on my behalf. Being well known in high school as the ‘class clown’ I found that Gemella became a regular visitor across my classes, especially if I was struggling to understand my teacher. ‘Lo Que Sea’ and ‘Que’ (meaning, ‘whatever’ and ‘what’) became Gemella’s ‘go to’ phrases. As my final two years of high school were heavily embellished in the worry of not obtaining a high enough score from the ‘International Baccalaureate,’ (IB) Gemella began to make a regular appearance. She acted as an outlet that allowed me to present an angry, ballsy, dramatic person that would make her opinions or frustrations known. Although I became increasingly aware of Gemella over those two years, I never referred to her as my ‘alter ego,’ I simply labelled my outbursts as Gemella – the hidden Gemma that not many people knew. Reflecting on this now several years on, it became apparent that, these ‘outbursts’ were reactions to my ‘survival instinct’ or ‘mask’ an amalgamation of qualities and experiences, which I encountered throughout my upbringing in Vietnam.

Being new to an expatriate lifestyle, my family and I took a while to adjust to a new country and a way of life. The high level of schooling, for example, was a particular quality that I was astonished by. Studying in a comprehensive/state school where classes were of mixed ability and no one wanted to learn was difficult for someone like me who always tried hard at school.



Figure 2: IB Learner Profile

Arriving at our new international school (public school) my sister and I quickly realised we were now amid a high calibre of individuals. Not one student would joke around when the class had a substitute teacher; everyone thrived in the environment wanting to be the best. We were encouraged to follow the ‘IB learner profile,’ (see Figure 2) which applauded excellence in the development of ‘internationally well-minded students’ who could ‘help to create a better and more peaceful world’ (IBO,

2017: online). One of my first parent teacher interviews at the age of 14 began with a discussion of possible preparation for SATS and visiting potential universities in my summers. Prior to being enrolled at this school I had never even considered life past my GCSE's let alone going to university, this mainly being due to the lack of stability I had received from my previous school. Getting over the initial shock of arriving at such a prestigious school I began to find my passion for learning again, I was responding to various elements of the IB learner profile, using it as my ethos, I was 'reflective', 'open minded' and more importantly I was thankful for the education I was now receiving. Although I struggled to achieve high grades, I found other ways to excel. I was accredited with various opportunities to represent the school, particularly within the performing arts department. I travelled to Japan, China and Laos to work alongside other individuals attending international schools who shared the same passion for the arts. These new opportunities were things I never imagined participating in, before I knew it I was submerged in a 'given' privilege through the wealth of experiences I was encountering, the more opportunities that emerged the more the novelty surrounding the opportunity weakened.

It was at the end of the first year of the IB programme when I now begin to remember Gemella becoming far more prominent in my day-to-day routine at school. The first year of the IB came with many triumphs as well as struggles, learning a new language and maintaining coursework being just a few of them. Extra-curricular activities were encouraged and I chose to be heavily involved with the performing arts department. I received two lead roles in the school's theatre productions, one of them being the role of 'Nancy' in *Oliver!* as well as rehearsals I was given my own private singing lessons where I was also trained in Opera. From this I became the lead singer of the new and improved 'Soul Band.' My dedication to the arts that year was awarded at presentation day where I was given the 'outstanding contribution to the

arts' award. This whole year was accompanied by a lot of attention and praise, it was like being a celebrity amongst the international school and expat community. This brought a lot of stress as I felt honoured and tried my best in every performance, not wanting to let down my 'following'. It was in the last rehearsal with the choir prior to presentation day that, I was told to stay behind by the choir conductor. She began to tell me that my attitude I had displayed in the last two rehearsals had been disgraceful (the disgraceful behaviour I was reprimanded for was due to the fact that I had sat down as I had felt dizzy). When she was telling the choir off for moaning, I backed her up and told the group to quieten down, that way we would be able to break for lunch sooner. She did not just stop there, she proceeded to say that she had spoken with my other teachers, my drama teacher – who had been my mentor this entire process and my Spanish teacher who myself and my family had become very close with, that my attitude had become more 'ballsy' I was apparently a 'drama queen' and that the role of Nancy had 'gone to my head.' She critiqued my performance with the soul band and said that I had got lazy and wasn't following my counts correctly. I stood there for a whole 20 minutes whilst she watched me sob as she continued to belittle me. The sparkle and passion I had inside of me was gone, I was now filled with pain and anger.

Over the next couple of weeks, I spent a long time reflecting on my behaviour and realised that what I was probably starting to believe the good comments I was receiving. The Gemella, or the 'ballsy' 'drama queen' that they were seeing was in no way malicious but simply spoke her mind more freely, and was maybe a little more pretentious than when I had first begun rehearsals. I needed closure on this situation, I spoke with a few students in the soul band and we put together a rendition of Leonard Cohen's, 'Hallelujah.' One of the last acts to take the stage for the end of year talent show I felt a new Gemella emerge, one that was confident, passionate and accepting

of her 'gift' that she gave to the school. The choir conductor approached me at the end of the show and said she had underestimated me, 'I wasn't like the others' she said. 'That was the best performance you've done all year, I guess our chat worked, you can put on quite a show, can't you?' in my mind I had won, I had finally got her seal of approval and shown that her words couldn't affect me.

It could be said that this situation shaped my attitude and growth in my final two years at the school. It made me reevaluate my actions that whole year, had I become a spoilt, privileged brat? Had I displayed any form of ungratefulness towards my choir conductor, maybe I didn't thank her enough for all of her help? My only way to understand this revolves around a form of resentment that had appeared between both of us that could have only formed due to being in constant rehearsals. My resentment came from a place where I felt she was not appreciating how hard I had been trying. Whereas her resentment came through how she saw me as a student. Amongst my peers, especially the younger choir members, they would look to me for advice and guidance, she saw this as if I were taking over her position. I also worked very closely with the head of music when asked to present the Gala concert. Which probably made me look as though I felt privileged and superior to her. This to me was the only reason why this situation unfolded. Although this upset me, I now look to this as the reason for why Gemella fully emerged. It made me reconsider everything about my expatriate upbringing and many other qualities that I had dismissed as the norm that were really not 'ok'. This is not to say that an expatriate or international school lifestyle can bring out the bad in people, but it does allow you to acknowledge and experience privilege in a variety of different ways.

When returning to the UK for university in 2011, it became alarmingly clear how very different an expatriate upbringing was when compared to my peers. Acknowledging this, made me reconsider who or what Gemella was, what had

once been small outbursts seemed to have oozed into my conversations with my peers, I was becoming a different person. This made me reconsider whether I had actually been this ‘alter ego’ the entire time I lived overseas and now ‘Gemma’ was actually trying to make an appearance again. This is where I began to acknowledge the ‘Shadow’ the “negative” side of my personality, which Jung accounts for as the slips of tongue and mistakes that often reveal feelings and motives which the conscious self disowns (Jung, 1983: 87). I became reluctant about sharing stories about my life, every element of the ‘expat’ lifestyle diminished instantly in a bid to adjust to a university lifestyle. Often an essence of Gemella (although subconsciously at the time) would be presented when returning to Vietnam for semester breaks. Reverting back to familiar surroundings and habits proved that ‘Gemma/Gemella’ flourished in the expatriate community before it was acknowledged ‘she’ even existed. Surrounded once again, by many mothers/expatriate women at luncheons who felt they were a ‘gift’. Gemella appeared through a form of mimicking them, finding humour in daily problems and upsets.

Many of these women had become accustomed to a privileged lifestyle in Vietnam, some had arrived recently having lived in various different places whereas others were the ‘originals’ who formed the group of friends when they arrived in Vietnam over ten years ago. It was joining these ladies over the years that I became greatly fascinated in how each of them presented themselves. Questioning what they were trying to prove? Or who they were trying to impress? What was this hidden ‘gift’ they all seemed to feel like they had? Like many social/ friendship structures each woman held certain dominance within the social crowd they were in. Some being the organizers, others being the sport fanatics, charity workers or small business owners, each woman obtained this ‘stereotyping’

as a way to hold relevance/dominance within the group. Many of these women did not work in Vietnam and were simply ‘ladies of leisure’ and filled their time with coffee mornings, luncheons, shopping, and organizing the next charity social. Although Gemella didn’t officially exist at this time, I believe her personality materialized from various conversations that I had with the women. Many of these just highlighted the difference in lifestyle between each of them. Their ‘gift’ I speak of is in fact their ‘unearned privilege’ that they had become greatly accustomed too. It was an air of arrogance that took over, especially with regards to money, how much you had to spend on trips away or the latest technology often would dominate conversation. A form of hierarchy appeared, it was almost a battle to see who could out spend the other.

Cosmopolitanism and Privilege

Dan Rebellato suggests cosmopolitanism is a ‘counter-tradition’ to globalization, which is to be seen as ‘an economic phenomenon’, that began in the 18th century (Rebellato, 2009: 11). He writes of the Greek fourth-century BCE philosopher, Diogenes of Sinope who first used the term ‘kosmopolitēs’, to express being a ‘citizen of the world’. This was translated into the modern word of ‘cosmopolitanism’. Rebellato defines cosmopolitanism as ‘[...] a belief that all human beings, regardless of their differences, are members of a single community and all worthy of equal moral regard’ (Rebellato, 2009:60). He suggests that cosmopolitanism is focused around the dedication to ‘enriching and deepening that global ethical community’ (Rebellato, 2009: 60).

However, others pose a slightly different understanding of cosmopolitan traits. Beck frames cosmopolitanisation by firstly ‘setting out what it is not’ (Beck in Bhambra, 2015: online). He notes that it should not be based on a reflection of

experiences of a privileged minority: 'it is not intended to convey the shallow political message that "we are all connected," nor does it normalize imperialism and existing global power relations' (Beck in Bhambra, 2015: online). Beck refers to a world formed of 'organ-selling nations versus organ-buying ones' (Beck in Bhambra 2015: online). By this he means that the poor are willing to sell their organs to the 'desperately ill rich individuals'. Beck portrays the negative side of cosmopolitanisation highlighting a 'bio-political' (Beck in Bhambra, 2015: online) stance, one that opposes Rebellato's notion of the term being to celebrate being a 'citizen of the world', and that refers to the poverty and wealth that can be witnessed within one population. Although I am in agreement with Rebellato encouraging many cosmopolitans to celebrate their enrichment I too, want Gemella to recognise the importance bio-politics has on an unequal world. It represents my upbringing from an expatriate community, whereby we were shielded from the poverty that was effectively on our doorsteps. It was something I found most distressing, not because I was uncomfortable, but because I was unsure how I was meant to help. This uncertainty came from living in a country where the majority of its population at the time lived below the poverty line. However, the increasing percentage of the 'rich' also did nothing to break this shield and respond to the bio-politics surrounding them.

Beck's notion of cosmopolitanism, or rather 'cosmopolitanisation,' pays particular attention to the concept of 'White Privilege.' His understanding regards the 'white body' protruding wealth and good health at the expense of someone poor. Peggy McIntosh draws a comparative between the white body, or rather, 'white privilege' and the 'phenomenon' that is, unacknowledged male privilege in *The Teacher in American Society: A Critical Anthology* (2011). She considers white privilege a phenomenon in its own right, being very similarly dismissed and sheltered, as that of male privilege. She proposes that white privilege is very much

‘alive and real in its effects,’ (McIntosh, 2011:122) within today’s hierarchical societies. Through her personal observations she notes that, white privilege can be ‘an invisible package of unearned assets’ (McIntosh, 2011: 122), which ‘whites’ are taught to not recognize. She describes this as an ‘[...] invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, code-books, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear and blank checks’ (McIntosh, 2011: 122). McIntosh began to value the ‘unearned assets’ (McIntosh, 2011: 122) of white privilege similarly to how she considers a man’s disregard of their ‘unearned advantage’ or ‘privilege’ (McIntosh, 2011: 122) amongst society. McIntosh’s findings heighten that both real and virtual society have been taught to not recognise white privilege as problem. Rather we have been taught to dismiss an evident cycle of the ‘poor helping the rich get richer’. We are quick to dismiss its power and meaning because often we inhabit it ourselves, something that we are not grateful of, something we almost resent when the true notion of the privilege is expressed.

The terminology surrounding white privilege is now closely related to many online profiles in the virtual world/ society. One Instagram account that has approached the complexity of white privilege on social media is ‘Barbie Savior’, which I will be discussing in regards to the social media platform in greater detail in the next chapter however, I bring this profile to your attention now due to the nature of its creation. The popular Instagram profile pokes fun at people possessing traits of the stereotypical ‘white saviour complex’. A term similar to white privilege the ‘white saviour complex’ is used to describe white westerners who travel to third world countries and make the whole trip a series of self-congratulatory experiences. The parody that surrounds this profile is how the creators have chosen to depict their experience abroad. Each photo uploaded presents a Barbie photo-shopped into an African setting. What is most admirable to its creators is the way they have torn the

barrier down between what social media have marginalized as the ‘correct’ photo and caption and have found humour in this suggestion. By posting the generic and ‘stereotypical’ captions on their posts, which many of us will relate to, be it a certain celebrity we follow online or even a friend, highlights what is most laughable about today’s online social profiles. Barbie Savior has also complemented its captions with the most cringe worthy hashtags such as, ‘#iloveafricasoicanloveafricans’ and ‘#povertyporn’ (Barbie Savior, 2017: online).

Again, this reinstates that for the ‘world’ or your friendship circle to acknowledge your unearned assets or your white saviour complexities we must flaunt it on social media to feel the effects rather than just accepting, that you went with a NGO and volunteered in Africa. Gemella’s acknowledgement of her own white privilege complexities, in particular the expat lifestyle comprehends much of McIntosh’s observations, that white privilege is almost a ‘given,’ an unspoken superiority of that part of society. Moreover, the Barbie Savior profile, (in particular, Figures 3 and 4) has opened up discussion for why privilege and self-congratulatory experiences need to be documented for you to feel ‘worthy’ within society. Or is it the opposite? Do we feel the need to upload a photo to amplify our lifestyles because society encourages it? Do we post a photo to cover what we are hiding and how we truly feel about certain things?

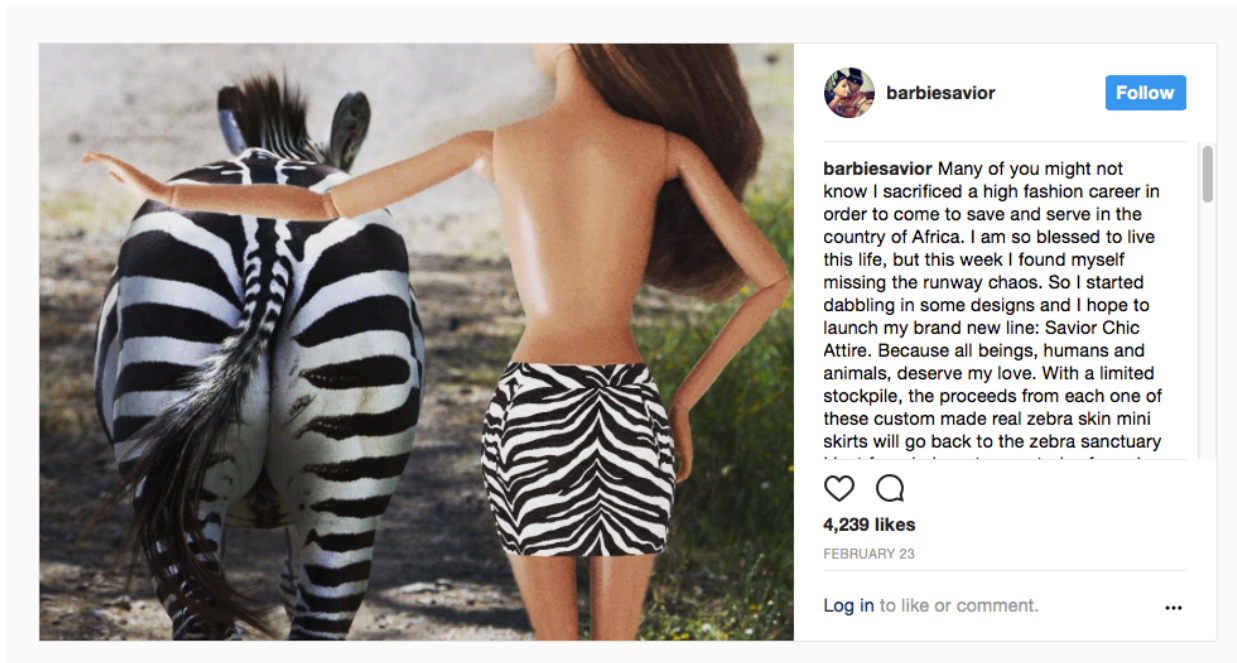


Figure 3 Barbie Savior Instagram Account



Figure 4 Barbie Savior Instagram Account

Considering where Gemella stemmed from, I believe the international school environment and the IBO prospectus embeds the white saviour complex in their students. As noted earlier, within the diploma programme students are required to obtain a certain amount of extra-curricular activities, which come under the heading of CAS hours (creativity, activity, and service). To successfully pass the IB students must not only participate in each area, but should try to hold a healthy balance within each criteria. Many of the school fieldtrips also optimised chances to achieve that balance such as, spending a week at an orphanage, learning sign language, teaching English, or even helping to build a new school in a rural village. The fieldtrip needed documentation; so many photographs were taken and were to be submitted in a journal full of reflections.

Now reconsidering the IB learner profile (Figure 2) it is apparent that, although students are encouraged to become well-rounded individuals it also emphasises what is greatly wrong with needing to self-congratulate. I do not resent my time working with orphanages or volunteering with other charities whilst abroad. However, the ethos that is embedded within the IBO and especially at my international school was the need for extensive documentation and constant self-reflection. Which is where the problem of needing to self-congratulate can arise. It was never enough just to go on the fieldtrip and experience the rewards of helping others. It was responding to a series of questions within the reflections that enhanced the ‘feel good’ opportunity that one had participated in. This is where for many veteran international school students there was a hidden agenda. One that made me question whether all of the students were participating with a charity because they wanted to, or whether they were participating because they had to achieve a set criteria.

This understanding of ‘white privilege’ relates closely to the ‘unearned privilege’ of many expatriate families, like my own, acquire when living abroad. There is still a very unclear ‘demarcation’ of understanding terminologies surrounding expatriation, including terms such as, ‘self-initiated expatriation’ (SIE), ‘assigned expatriation’ (AE) and migration, which are ‘overlapping and are often applied interchangeably’ (Anderson et al, 2014: online). Both SIE and AE hold relevance when considering Gemella’s positioning amongst an expat society. Defining which type of expatriation she fits under will also hold adequate understanding of how and why she chooses to negotiate her privilege. Many agree that an ‘assigned expatriate’ can be ‘an employee who is sent abroad by his/her one company, usually receiving an expatriate contract’ (Anderson et al, 2014: online). The ‘self-initiated expat’ is an individual that ‘undertakes international work experience with little or no organizational sponsorship’ (Anderson et al, 2014: online). When debating the definition of a ‘migrant,’ the UN specifies that a migrant can be defined as ‘any person who changes his or her country of usual residence’ (UN, 1998: 17). However, the difference between the three terms is ‘less evident’ (Anderson et al 2014: online) each holding the same purpose, a person who has left their original country of residence.

Baruch et al (2010) make a distinction between expatriates and migrants ‘in terms of rights to permanent residency,’ suggesting that at some stage an ‘expat’ could make the transition to become a ‘migrant’ when applying for citizenship or permanent visa status. This suggests that ‘migrant status’ is when a person is making the move permanent, hoping to gain citizenship or a permanent visa. The terms AE and SIE are then appropriate for people who reside in a different country than their resident country, but do not intend on making this an indefinite move; instead they reside in the country as ‘expats’ on short-term visas or renewed residency cards often on an expatriate salaried contract. A residency card was awarded by the Vietnamese

government to ‘foreigners’ who wish to reside in Vietnam for a long period of time due to business, study or research. The permanent or temporary resident card was viable for my father, as he already had obtained a work permit; this meant the rest of the family were also eligible for the card as we were accompanying my father due to his work commitments. Like McIntosh highlights, the residency card came with variety of ‘unearned assets’. The card could act as a passport, being a proof of identity and an entry visa whilst travelling within Vietnam. This again emphasised a level of superiority amongst the expat community; we were treated as ‘Upper-class Vietnamese citizens’. Obtaining a residency card greatly impacted the development of my alter ego, especially when considering the treatment received by having one. It reinstated how being of higher rank or more distinguished was valued in Vietnam. This high-calibre way of life would influence how Gemella would be perceived through performance.

‘White expat privilege’ is a status incurred by being an AE or SIE overseas in countries that are less economically developed (LEDC). Effectively the system of white expatriate privilege in Vietnam was based on a hierarchical system of wealth. Although it may seem like a disheartened approach to view expatriate pre-eminence through promoting ‘the rich getting richer’, many others view living overseas from Rebellato’s cosmopolitan perspective. It is a way to celebrate our differences by understanding that it is ‘legitimate differences’ and coexistence that make up society today. I hope in the creation of Gemella that I am able to offer a critique of how white expat privilege can be displayed amongst AE, SIE societies and propose that we reflect and celebrate difference and community through cosmopolitanism.

As a performance maker, I intend to incorporate Jen Harvie’s thinking of a cosmopolitan community. She explains cosmopolitanism as feeling part of a ‘community in an audience’ whereby people vary in age, ethnicity and class. What

excites her about this experience is the ‘profound almost visceral recognition that I share a feeling with an audience who otherwise feel different; in other words that I feel my simultaneous similarity and difference within that audience’ (Harvie, 2009: 76). This requires us to distinguish what we have shared universally, and the characteristics that we hold globally with other humans, as well as accepting legitimate differences. Harvie refers to Kwame Anthony Appiah who explains that, the term ‘cosmopolitan’ is used to identify a ‘citizen of cosmos’ (Appiah cited in Harvie, 2009: 76). In this sense, the ‘cosmos’ refer to the world, not just the earth but also the entire universe. Therefore, this term conveys the ‘ethical need to understand those with whom we share the planet, especially in economic terms’ (Appiah cited by Harvie, 2009: 76). Harvie continues to explain that Appiah recognises that sometimes these two principles (universal concern and respect for legitimate difference) can clash. From this he proposes that ‘rather than seeing a state of cosmopolitanism as already achieved, we consider it a goal, a challenge to be pursued through ‘habits of coexistence: conversation in its older meaning, of living together, association’ (Appiah cited by Harvie, 2009: 76).

‘Cosmopolitanism’ as Appiah notes is a terminology used to describe being a citizen of the world or (cosmos). Yet, it now groups together a variety of constructs that may influence the individual such as, white privilege, the white saviour complex, and AE/SIE expatriation. By adding another layer to its meaning, these terminologies further reinstate the challenge that must be considered when we look for a well-rounded cosmopolitan individual. Like both Harvie and Appiah, I agree that cosmopolitanism should be considered a goal rather than an achieved state. As a cosmopolitan inflicted alter ego, I hope that Gemella can achieve performative strategies that to an audience that highlight the familiarity of being both an expat and

privileged individual. Moreover, I hope that this allows for strong consideration surrounding the bio-politics that surround the expatriates of Vietnam.

Learning from Tammy WhyNot

Performance artist Lois Weaver is perhaps best known for one of her reoccurring roles within her repertoire, her ‘performing persona’ or alter ego, Tammy WhyNot. Her most recent and ongoing research project titled *What Tammy Needs To Know...* (2014) is a musical exploration of the taboo subjects of desire, pleasure and intimacy that aren’t usually spoken about publicly. Prior to the performance Weaver as WhyNot engaged with a variety of groups through workshops and performance interventions. This has developed public knowledge on issues like education, class, high art, popular culture, performance and human rights, feminism and femininity, and most recently, sex and ageing. As Harvie notes, Weaver is creating a cosmopolitan community in an audience by dealing with topics that can vary through, age, ethnicity and class.

A ‘former famous country music singer turned lesbian performance artist’ (Weaver, 2013: online) Jill Dolan has described Tammy WhyNot’s costuming in detail; ‘Weaver wears her hair dyed, platinum-blond hair bouffant style, paints her face with heavy but tasteful makeup, and decorates herself with rhinestone jewellery and satin dresses’ (Dolan, 1987: 167). Speaking in an interview, WhyNot comments: ‘Tammy shares a body with Lois Weaver, Tammy was born in 1978, when she was working with Spider Women Theatre Company and then she kinda got reincarnated with Split Britches Company in 1984 *Upwardly Mobile Home*’ (Weaver, 2011: online). Although Weaver/WhyNot state that (Tammy) was ‘born’ in ‘1978’ she is still the same age as Weaver (67 years old – in the year 2017), starting her journey at that

point and growing with Weaver. It could be suggested by this statement that, this is the year she accepted that there are different parts to her, read through a Freudian perspective, as if Weaver were acknowledging her 'Id' through WhyNot.

WhyNot says that she was created by Weaver to become a person that Weaver was not: she was someone who could ask the embarrassing questions. Tammy could come across as dumb and 'naïve on behalf of everybody' (Weaver, 2011: online), and was not afraid to voice her opinion. Weaver suggests that she is taking a political stance by tackling a range of different issues through her alter ego's voice. For example, she chooses to use Tammy WhyNot as a structure to explore uncomfortable and contested categories such as 'trailer trash' and 'high femme,' and to express a complex form of identity politics. 'High femme' refers to a lesbian as 'ultra-feminine in appearance and behaviour' (Lotrian, 2008: online). This signifier allows WhyNot to question reasons for being overly 'feminine' or presenting elements of femininity. Jill Dolan has noted that the feminist critics focus on how, '[...] the nature of representation is altered by the gender of performers and the spectators, as well by their sexual preference' (Dolan, 1987: 156). This highlights the need for WhyNot's work to be created, since as Dolan argues, gender and sexuality are crucial to bringing 'dynamic and desire into play', expressing the 'narrative's structure, the production's "look," and the relationship between spectator and spectacle' (Dolan 1987: 156). WhyNot's work deems it acceptable to make uncomfortable and contested categories public knowledge whilst acting 'dumb and naïve on behalf of everybody' (Weaver, 2011: online). Weaver uses high femme as a way to resist stereotypes of femininity while at the same time performing this contested subjectivity.

Miranda Sings

YouTube sensation ‘Miranda Sings’ is the Internet alter ego of Colleen Ballinger.¹ In an interview Ballinger explains why she began posing as a character rather than herself. She comments, ‘[T]he thought of someone just filming themselves alone in their bedroom and uploading it online for a lot of people to see was very bizarre’ (Ballinger in Wilstein, 2016: online). Instead she opted to create the character of Miranda Sings, who Ballinger based on the ‘mean girls at her college’ (2016: online). Originally ‘a total joke’ amongst friends about the typical girls at her university, Ballinger thought nothing more of the character she posted of online. Miranda was intended as a satirical character highlighting many characterisations of a bad but overconfident singer.

The first Miranda video to go viral was titled ‘free voice lesson’ with the caption ‘if you want a voice lesson please email me. I am a professional teacher’ (Sings, 2009: online). The video received a lot of attention purely because it emphasised many stereotypical YouTube videos at the time. Sings began creating various ‘How to sing’ or ‘How to get a boyfriend’ styled videos all of which presented her ironic online persona. Ballinger notes how seeing her YouTube subscriptions climb she became determined to not reveal her identity. She comments, ‘[T]hat was my goal, to make sure everyone believed she was a real person’ (Ballinger in Wilstein, 2016: online). Ballinger states that she ‘would even book herself gigs as Miranda, and show up to the venue in character’ (Wilstein, 2016: online), which, she adds, “I never broke.”

Sings addresses many of her viewers who leave insulting or hurtful comments as ‘haters.’ Ballinger notes that it was these comments and her response to them in

¹ Colleen Ballinger is also famous for her own profile ‘PsychoSoprano’.

character that has led to her being one of the most famous characters on YouTube. She comments,

I would do whatever the haters said they didn't like [...] [T]hey'd say, 'I don't like your lipstick,' so I'd put on more. That's how the character has evolved, based on whatever the haters said they didn't like.' (Ballinger in Wilstein, 2016: online)

Much like WhyNot, it could be suggested that Sings, uses her fame/ YouTube platform to highlight often 'cringe-worthy' contested subjects, with titles used such as, 'How to use toilet paper', 'Doing Porn on Halloween' or 'Smell the body part challenge' holds a Miranda Sings twist to the content, responding to the content/category in a childlike manner.

Sings/Ballinger's most recent project has seen her work on a new Netflix original series titled *Haters Back Off*. Aired in October 2016, Haters Back Off follows the story of Miranda Sings and her rise to fame on YouTube. Much like her YouTube channel, the TV series sees the absurdity that is created by Sings concentrating on her home-life, supposedly behind the scenes glimpses of what Miranda Sings life was like before it went viral.

Appearance and costuming of Alter Egos

Both Ballinger and Weaver rely on costuming to create their alter egos, and create distance between themselves and their character. In order to understand the significance of this approach, it might be convenient to refer to Michael Kirby's seminal piece of work *On Acting and Not-Acting* (1972). In there, Kirby recognizes that 'representation, simulation and other of the qualities that define acting may also be applied to the performer' (Kirby, 1972: 4). He continues to state that one example of this is, is the way 'costume creates a "character"' (Kirby, 1972: 4) suggesting that we consider costume as part of a 'continuum.' He explains, 'if a person wears cowboy

boots on the street, as many people do, we do not identify him as a cowboy' (Kirby, 1972: 4). However, if more elements of clothing are associated with that of a cowboy such as a 'bandana, chaps and spurs' (Kirby, 1972: 4), we then reach an opinion where we 'either see a cowboy or a person dressed as (impersonating) cowboy' (Kirby, 1972: 4). Kirby comments that 'specific identification' occurs at different points along the 'continuum' for many depending on various different factors, the most important one being 'place or physical context' (Kirby, 1972: 4). Applying the same costume continuum to performers on stage also involves as recognising symbolic identifiers, however identification on stage can sometimes be more 'pronounced' (Kirby, 1972: 4). For example, a 'performer wearing only black leotards and western boots might easily be identified as a "cowboy"' (Kirby, 1972: 4). This highlights the power of symbolism through costuming character, however it must be noted that this 'symbolization' is often 'reinforced' by the actor performing a role.

Kirby's analysis of the use of costume being a signifier for actors/characters also allows individuals to fully embody the alter ego by identifying themselves in costume. For Ballinger and Weaver to 'become' their alter egos they are 'not acting' but performing their 'specific identification'. Through not acting they are acknowledging that this person (alter ego) is them, but at the same time not them. It is here I propose that an alter ego is the threshold of acting or performing. We negotiate the 'specific identification' that allows the 'not acting' to fluctuate throughout different stages of the continuum. Furthermore, it could be suggested that when an alter ego is released into the public domain they are not a self but actually performing as part of the continuum. Therefore, for both Ballinger and Weaver to fully embody their alter egos, they may not only have to be wearing a costume but also reacting to the symbolic signifiers along the continuum. For example, Tammy WhyNot is always seen on stage therefore, for Weaver's costume to portray Tammy, Weaver must be

reacting and engaging to both the space and audience as well as the presentation of costume and stage. This could be considered similarly for Ballinger, she is only ever Miranda when corresponding to specific signifiers too, in this case, when she is in front of a camera in the same room that she always films in. Both Ballinger and Weaver use this form of costume continuum to create a type ‘mask’ described by Jung, symbolizing a set of ‘society ideals’ (which they either choose to abide by or resist – or both). Through both alter egos expression through costume has allowed a stronger connection and recognition with their audience.

In an interview Ballinger was asked ‘And the clothes?’ (Fargo, 2014: online). Ballinger’s response to the question was,

Inspiration was taken from my homeschooled years. Some of the kids I knew would make their own dresses and would wear men’s clothing...clothes that were too big, mismatched and weird combinations of clothes. A lot of the clothes I wear as Miranda, I wore when I was 13. They’re straight up from my homeschooled days and now they’re getting some good use! (Ballinger in Fargo, 2014: online).

As Ballinger’s alter ego is informed by past experiences, such as her home schooling experience, and college life it seems fitting that she has opted to signify her embodiment of character through the clothing of her youth. It must be noted here that Miranda Sings attire is not ‘fashionable.’ She appears in every one of her video blogs (V’logs) dressed in oversized shirts – often printed with absurd patterns. This often clashes with her bright red baggy sweat pants with the message printed across the back ‘Haters Back Off.’ Sings’ love for overcompensating with her red lipstick often results in it being smeared all around her lips.

In comparison, Lois Weaver’s costuming as Tammy WhyNot corresponds closely with her response to contested subjects such as ‘trailer trash’ and ‘high femme’. Jill Dolan (1987) refers to WhyNot’s costuming when she appeared on *Chit*

Chat with Carmelita (1984) stating that ‘the attention to gender costuming is key’ (Dolan, 1987:165) to this lesbian performance arranged as a talk show. Dolan notes that the hostess of the talk show, Carmelita Tropicana, portrayed by Alana Troyano is a lesbian performer ‘dressed in female drag’ (Dolan, 1987: 165) and that together these performers ‘foreground the gender role of women in hetero-sexual society and within the lesbian community’ (Dolan, 1987: 165). They do this by the use of ‘exaggerate gestures’ and ‘costuming of the feminine woman as “femme”’ (Dolan, 1987:165). Dolan expresses the concern surrounding the effect costuming has with regards to the making of character and personae. Referring to the ‘Chit Chat’ in particular she adds that costume ‘is important and elaborate, as if to acknowledge that people’s carefully constructed “looks” have much to do with the way gender is code’ (Dolan, 1987: 165). Dolan describes WhyNot as a “send-up” of the femme role’ (Dolan, 1987: 167) suggesting her reasons for this is to present an ‘effect’ that is meant to be taken as ‘commentary’. Allowing for both Weaver and Troyano to ‘undermine gender, race and class stereotyping’ (Dolan, 1987: 167). Although this being said the way it is offered to its audience is through an ‘affectionate and empathetic’ manner. Weaver’s choice of costume for WhyNot holds an over exaggerated view of the way ‘trailer trash’ and ‘high femme’ are viewed in society. Through this ‘send-up’ demeanor, she demonstrates how gendered costuming follows a similar continuum that Kirby describes, a symbolization that can be identified by its audience.

Practice as Gemella

My first practical research experiments attempted to underpin the ‘character’ of my alter ego by responding to Kirby’s suggestion of the ‘costume continuum’. An experiment titled ‘Gemma vs Gemella’ explored the use of costuming by using

symbolic the traits of stereotypical expatriate women I encountered whilst living abroad in Vietnam.

‘Gemma vs Gemella’ began as a photography experiment, playing with physical appearance. One side of my face remained ‘Gemma’ applying ordinary makeup and keeping my hair natural. A form of ‘Gemella’ appeared on the opposite side of my face – a different shade of foundation, bronzer, heavy eyeliner and dark eye shadow, completed with glitter and straightened hair (See Figure 5). I decided to make up my face as Gemella to represent what I thought I would look like if I was an expat women living in Vietnam. It is slightly unclear from the photograph in Figure 6 but a far more prominent differentiation of both sides of my face could be witnessed off camera. A clear distinction was made between Gemma and Gemella, when considering their make-up choices. Gemella’s make-up was more about highlighting every feature of her face whereas; Gemma’s make-up (my own everyday make-up) was quite bland and unnoticeable. Although the outcome of the practice showed a difference visually, it also highlighted why these dissimilarities in appearance had made the photography experiment reach an alternative outcome. Originally, I had been hopeful for the practice to achieve a complete transformation, that is, I hoped to find Gemella in one photoshoot. However, the piece left me to reconsider Gemella’s response to the use of symbolic identifiers that can be associated with a woman living abroad as an expat. As you can see in Figure 6, a now ‘completed’ full face of Gemella highlights a clear difference when compared to the left side of my face in Figure 5.



Figure 5 Gemma Vs. Gemella Photography Experiment



Figure 6 Gemma Vs. Gemella Photography Experiment

Through this photograph it could be suggested that the, symbolic identifiers for the stereotypical expatriate women that Gemella is based upon, are related closely to vanity. For example, why would you opt to wear a face full of foundation in a sunny country? Why had she chosen to wear glitter around her eyes? Why would you choose to flat iron your naturally curly hair in a city with high humidity? It could be suggested that Gemella's over indulgence in makeup and hair styling is to prove her wealth? After all, why would she 'brag' about spending half of her day in a salon to not flaunt a new look amongst her expatriate circle? Moreover, the ever-growing need for her designer dresses to be teamed with the correct Chanel bag and heels further reinstates the significance of the expatriate lifestyle as it symbolically identifies with the hierarchal system of wealth and white privilege. Gemella opting to flaunt her wealth in this way relates closely to the comparison between myself and Gemella; I was embarrassed of my privilege and often the thought of having to associate with some alarming rude women, whereas, Gemella has decided to embrace it, and become a true expatriate woman.

Although these symbolic identifiers were highlighted to me through this practice I still felt there was something missing from the Gemella seen in performance

and in costume. Gemella's facial expression felt unresponsive, almost redundant, when considering the changes that had been made to her appearance and styling.

Considering Kirby's thoughts of the costume continuum amid my own practice it became clear that, unlike Ballinger and Weaver I had yet to find a space that considered the specific identifiers that related to Gemella. Although the photo attempted to display the symbolic identifiers Gemella was yet to reach the stage along the continuum where she was 'not acting' but performing.

Through this project, I considered how I felt about the use of these signifiers and costuming – in particular, how I might start to develop a visual world for Gemella that could help me explore my interior world. As a result, following on from '*Gemma vs Gemella*', '*Gem [ella]*' was an eight-month photography experiment that documented a 'visual diary', taking photos that acknowledged when I felt more like Gemella than Gemma, it documented where and when I felt most uncomfortable.

Please view Appendix A: *The Gem[ella] Photography Experiment*

Appendix A presents photos, which document part of the visual diary. They capture moments of hybridity where I am stuck between channelling someone else, whilst attempting to correspond to daily tasks/work commitments/meetings as Gemma. The photos highlight where I felt costuming or the use of symbolic identifiers were blended with the stereotyping of identity through the process of analysing my clothing. My intention was to highlight that a variety of clothing is often marginalized within a specific category such as, 'hipster', 'geek' or 'basic bitch'. However, my questioning aimed to contemplate how one individual could interchangeably be considered a different person. An individual that shifts and adapts, much like a cosmopolitan. This interchanging corresponds to the 'continuum' whereby I acknowledged at points in my everyday routine that I was not acting or performing but still presenting Gemella. By

acknowledging this hybridity amongst the continuum, I have been able to pick up on these moments and consider them for performance. This has allowed me to pinpoint what identifiers Gemella corresponds highly to. For example, Gemella flourished when given the opportunity to reunite with some of my expatriate peers, and when shopping for new make-up she would happily appear in a new selfie the following day, documenting that she had spent £40+ on high-end cosmetics such as, Chanel or NARS. Travelling also acted as an identifier that saw Gemella surface. Coincidentally, within this eight-month visual diary I spent four months on a university exchange in Canada. When looking back at my photographs from Canada it became clear to me that in a significant number of those photos I was probably corresponding along the continuum more so to Gemella than myself, again not ‘acting’ but relating to Gemella in those situations. A choice to take a photograph holding a ‘Starbucks Coffee’ takeaway cup, teamed with large framed glasses, highlighted moments where I didn’t even recognise me as myself, nor did I as this expatriate woman I had fallen into the habit of becoming. I was happy to shift towards a stereotype of the ‘basic bitch’ posing as a typecast of the white privilege ethos, this again underpinned by my easy acceptance of interchanging personae along the continuum.

Chapter Conclusion

Chapter One has seen me pinpoint my own understanding surrounding how the use of Freud and Jung’s theorisations of the psychoanalytic theory can be transferred into a more conceptual understanding of the alter ego in performance. Through this understanding and the purposes of shadow, mask and the Id, I have been able to formulate that my alter ego has been created through instinct as a way to adapt modern society. This adaptability can be seen through my discussion of my last two years of study in Vietnam and my return to the UK for university. The early stages of my

practice have focused on learning to recognise a shift in my subconscious. This was something within my practice that came with time, struggling to understand why I had these Gemella outbursts was something that I had not realised should've been regarded as a 'shift'. That was until my analysis of the psychoanalytic theory, understanding a shift between the unconscious and conscious thought process allowed me to consider where and why I felt differently; often this reverted back to thoughts or opinions that would've been 'buried'. With the process and creation of Gemella focusing on the shift, my practice and development was furthered with my understandings of Kirby's costume continuum analysis. As noted, my attention within Kirby's continuum suggests for a character or in this instance, an alter ego to fully embody their subconscious, they must consider signifiers that correspond to the shift in conscious. Through practice, especially the *Gem[ella]* photography experiment I have been able to evaluate how effective the continuum is. My realisation is that; it holds much of its effect in how I have opted to value the embodiment process. Gemella can be seen throughout the photography experiment as an extension of self, a visual response to the correlation between the Ego and self, a mask. Much like Jung suggests, the mask can be interchangeable, or altered to engage within each society. However, for Gemella, this privilege mask she obtains does not fit, it is uncomfortable. This further indicated that only the slightest change in appearance or attitude could affirm or reinstate a symbolic trait or action that had been created through a subconscious state, this employed through a need to 'find myself.'

Chapter Two

The Alter Ego through Live/Digital Presence

This chapter considers how the embodiment of an alter ego might be further developed through digital platforms. It moves forward the ideas in the previous chapter by exploring the application of psychoanalytic theory to social media through the concept of an ‘online avatar’ (Aboujadoude, 2011: 9). Examples of online avatars include the YouTube video blogging (V’logging) stars Sprinkle of Glitter (Louise Pentland) and Zoella (Zoe Sugg). Employing the concept of performing along a ‘connectivity continuum’, the chapter critically reflects upon several practice research experiments as Gemella, including the *Gemella Live: Stream*; two V’logs, *4* Hell* and *#PASSPORTPROBS*; and *The Gemella Gif Series*. As a whole, this chapter aims to discover more about how performing across a digital spectrum might lead to new individual and social understandings through an alter ego.

The Culture of Connectivity

José Van Dijck’s *The Culture of Connectivity* (2013) acknowledges that ‘within less than a decade, a new infrastructure for online sociality and creativity has emerged, penetrating every fibre of culture today’ (Van Dijck, 2013: 4). This ‘new infrastructure’ is based on and shaped by social media, which is defined as ‘a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of the user-generated content’ (Kaplan and Haenlein in Van Dijck, 2013: 4). This constructs a ‘new online layer’, which allows people to ‘organise their lives’ (Van Dijck, 2013: 4). It also influences

human interaction within an individual community or on a ‘larger societal level, while the worlds of online and offline are increasingly interpenetrating’ (Van Dijck. 2013: 4).

Van Dijck’s focus within the social ‘connectivity’ spectrum lies with ‘large and influential platforms,’ including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn, which are the driving force of the ‘new online layer’. Their ‘monetizing potential’ with their users has led to an interconnection of various different platforms and forms of social media have created habits amongst individuals. These platforms have infiltrated individual lives in ways that seem ‘informal’ and pose as ‘ephemeral manifestations of social life’,

Talking to friends, exchanging gossip, showing holiday pictures, scribbling notes, checking on a friend’s well-being, or watching a neighbor’s home video used to be casual, evanescent (speech) acts, commonly shared only with the selected individuals. (Van Dijck, 2013: 7)

Van Dijk states that social media has led to a ‘major change’; what were once comments to a friend or a photo of a holiday have become ‘formalized inscriptions’ (Van Dijck, 2013: 7). These are ‘embedded’ in a much ‘larger economy of wider publics’ that take on a completely ‘different value’. Comments made informally are now free to be dispersed with a much larger public domain, which can sometimes result in ‘far-reaching and long-lasting effects’ (Van Dijck 2013: 7). Van Dijk argues that these platforms have ‘unquestionably’ shifted the nature of private and public methods of communication, something that can now never be undone (Van Dijk 2013: 7).

Gemella Live: Stream

Questioning this shift in private and public domains enabled me to develop a practice research performance, one that presented Gemella as the epitome of the

modern day cosmopolitan who wants to share her experiences of living as an expat overseas. Considering my previous practice experiments had involved photo documentation, it seemed fitting that Gemella attempted to negotiate and critique herself through a digital platform. *The Gemella Live: Stream* was a live interactive ‘question and answer’ video, performed and documented on the social media platform *Google Hangout: YouTube live broadcast*. The broadcast presents Gemella talking to her Twitter and wider social media following, just before she attends the season finale of *Vietnam Idol*.

Please watch Appendix B, <i>Gemella Live: Stream</i> now.

This performance led me to develop the concept of a ‘connectivity continuum’ based on a combination of Van Dijck’s theorisation of social media and Michael Kirby’s modelling of performance (discussed in Chapter One). Kirby’s (1972) continuum suggests that ‘not acting’ occurs at a point on the continuum when a performer is simultaneously relating to one or more identifiers, such as, items of clothing such as cowboy boots and a bandana that hold connotations to the display of a cowboy. Similarly, on the ‘connectivity continuum,’ an individual is engaging with and fluctuating across a set of symbolic signifiers that correspond to technology and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Examples of these signifiers relate closely to how the individual chooses to interact and operate their own on social media by, tweeting, posting photos, liking and sharing others status’ etc. Therefore, the connectivity continuum when related to the performance of the *Gemella Live: Stream* allows us to consider what is public or private, individual and social, online and offline. Corresponding similarly to how Kirby’s costume continuum functions through the concept of acting and non-acting.

With this performance, I began to poke fun at ‘fame’, especially when this seems to be based on obtaining a large number of followers on social media. It hints at how celebrities across the globe believe they can instantly obtain a ‘following’ on social media platforms because of their performances of superiority or privileged positions in a world that is simultaneously on and offline. The live stream addressed the notion of what it means to be a ‘well-connected user’ of social media, something that Van Dijck expresses as a ‘confliction’ between the way individuals regard ‘human connectedness’ and ‘automated connectivity’ (Van Dijck, 2013: 7). The term ‘well connected’ within an offline world usually means that an individual’s connections are ‘gauged by their quality and status rather than quantity’ (Van Dijck, 2013: 7). By contrast, on social media, ‘well-connected’ refers to terms such as ‘friend’ and ‘friending’ which ‘designate strong and weak ties, intimate contacts as well as total strangers’ (Van Dijck, 2013: 13) and these ‘friends’ are presented as one overall number on your social media profile.

Gemella Live: Stream aimed to highlight how a culture of connectivity can drive an individual to believe that friendship or a following is ‘quantifiable’. Van Dijck calls this the ‘popularity principle’: the more contacts you have and make, the more valuable you become, because more people think you are popular and hence want to connect with you (Van Dijck, 2013: 13). Individuals, or ‘celebrities,’ who obtain large amounts of ‘friends’ or ‘followers’ are branded as ‘influential’ which furthers an increasing social authority.

Exploring Van Dijck’s notion of the ‘popularity principle’, Gemella posed as an, ‘influential’ video blogging sensation. Her intention through the live stream, which, was projected to an audience in an adjoining room, was to form an interaction between the audience and Gemella. By receiving questions through her newly created Twitter handle, Gemella attempted to negotiate elements of the connectivity

continuum by corresponding to signifiers such as, tweeting and live streaming. However, she attempts to critique her position by the way she displays public and social elements of her lifestyle online. From this we must also consider that, prior to the practice, Gemella had not been acknowledged nor had she engaged in social media interaction. She suddenly appeared as a ‘famous’ individual online. Whether this was believable or not to the audience they still opted to ‘tweet’ Gemella about her lifestyle and why she was such an A-list celebrity in Vietnam.

In *Life on the Screen Identity in the Age of the Internet* (1995), Sherry Turkle argues that ‘we step through the screen into virtual communities, we reconstruct identities on the other side of the looking glass’ (Turkle, 1995: 177). With reference to the *Gemella Live: Stream*, as an alter ego, Gemella could be envisioned as a form of ‘reconstruction’, as Turkle suggests, a ‘cultural work in progress’ (Turkle, 1995: 177) responding to an identity online. Through a virtual community, the other side of the looking glass, Gemella could be made into a reconstruction from any of the questions her audience asked. She could negotiate what would be a socially acceptable answer. The practice allowed Gemella to reconstruct an identity based upon how an audience could react to her. Meaning that, the mask she created was one that was either favoured or disliked by her audience.

By spending so much time connecting and corresponding to one another through the power of the Internet, Turkle fears we have weakened our roots and become displaced. Relating closely to Gemella’s expat status, displacement is a running occurrence amongst many expats. It refers to a feeling of being uprooted and disconnected from the place you currently reside in. For Gemella her reference to displacement also considers the issue she has when trying to connect with her nationality, having lived in her native country for a small period of time, she struggles to obtain a form of patriotism. Yet, she also struggles to feel welcome in her current

‘home’ as she is still living a lifestyle, which is classified as privileged. Within a digital spectrum, the fear of displacement often further heightens a user’s integrated-ness when socialising online, feeling a stronger sense of identity and self-control on social media platforms. This aligns with Van Dijck understanding of the popularity principle, with a feeling of increased self-worth based on the abundance of followers and ‘likes’ you obtain online. I believe the use of both the popularity principal and connectivity continuum have been manifested together through the formation of an alter ego. Within the *Gemella Live: Stream* there was an attempt to achieve effective signification within performance. This meant there needed to be a clear understanding that, what you are creating (in my case an alter ego) corresponds closely to the unconscious mask. Placing this practice on a platform such as, Google Hangout has meant that the signifiers chosen throughout the practice have focused on how an individual is viewed by an audience on the Internet. Noting that, social media is made up of a series of ideals and constructs, individuals must decide whether they are opting to please through use of the popularity principle or whether they are opting to resist the grain of stereotyping by presenting a true self, online.

This leads to questioning whether anyone can ever really be ‘true’ on social media when considering what it means to be a ‘well-connected user’ of social media. Turkle’s questions allowed me to further my contemplation of, how the *Gemella Live: Stream* should be considered, she asks, ‘will it satisfy our needs for connection and other social participation’ or ‘will it further undermine our fragile relationships?’ (Turkle, 1995: 178). Most importantly, to me, this argues that *Gemella Live* continues a case of what relevance social media can have on the individual. Reinstating that our online identities could affect our offline responsibilities through actions and opinions online.

Psychoanalytic Theory and the Internet Ego

Turkle's suggestion that social media leads to and relies on a reconstruction of self-identity, returns us to the concept of the alter ego, or perhaps more appropriately, an 'Internet ego'. How the mask should be regarded within this reconstruction of the 'internet ego', posed as a question to me throughout the *Gemella Live: Stream*: does the mask hold more connotations when several of our social groups could be interlinked through various social networking sites? In response to my question I believe that the online mask does pose many more connotations, especially with regards to a live stream where you have no control of who watches or what questions are asked. My consideration of this, led me to believe that, Gemella's Internet ego opted to be more versatile. Although, she was engaging through questions she was unaware of whom she was actually responding too. This meant at times her answers were, friendly and insightful and at other points short and sarcastic. This versatility has meant that the reconstruction of Gemella has been framed to operate interchangeably, when uncertain of the particular audience she is engaging with.

Like Turkle, the psychiatrist Elias Aboujaoude has written that the way individuals now look at the world has shifted and that new personality traits have been 'born and nurtured in the virtual world' (Aboujaoude, 2011:10). Much like Carl Jung's belief that the shadow is 'the moral' problem that challenges our ego identity, Aboujaoude believes that there is a new 'moral.' This 'code that we adopt online' leads to a change in behavior, becoming 'impulsive' and adopting habits that return back to a childlike nature. Aboujaoude suggests that the internet is 'fundamentally changing us' (Aboujaoude, 2011:10) and that the ways in which society interacts with one another online is significantly different to how we would offline. He writes that our,

online traits are unconsciously being imported into our offline life, so that our idea of what a real-life community should be [...] is being reconfigured in the image of a chat room, and our offline persona increasingly resembles that of an avatar. (Aboujaoude, 2011: 11)

Aboujaoude describes a shift in what is considered the ‘offline personality’, or what Jung calls the ‘private life’: how the individual struggles to adapt to the ideals of society, and therefore reverts to online profiles to generate an ‘e-personality’ that, ‘despite not being real, is full of life and vitality’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 20). The “e-personality” can now reverse cultural ideals, making online behavior and social exchange ‘unfettered.’ The e-personality amplifies confidence and ‘can act as a liberating force for the real-life individual’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 20). This ‘unfettered’ response to the role the internet plays in the formation of the Ego parallels and reinforces how the Jungian shadow allows us to imprint our unconscious thought without restriction.

Aboujaoude notes that this online avatar ‘nicely complements the actual person and acts as an extension of his real-life persona’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 20) and that slight changes in presentation (such as increased confidence, courageousness and influential aspects) may be seen in terms of an ‘extension’ of self. This implies that the virtual version of the individual is ‘more efficient’ than the offline ‘real-life original,’ mainly due to how an individual decides to promote themselves online. Appearing more ‘efficient’ may be the result of conscious self-censoring what is posted onto a daily social media feed. For example, when posting about an achievement it is possible that the individual will leave out that they relentlessly procrastinated or only just met a deadline. In some cases, certain individuals may struggle to fully adapt their conscious when using a mask to fit society², this may suggest that an individual

² With reference to Carl Jung’s ‘Mask’ detailed in Chapter One.

is more aware of their unconscious avatar and thought process than others. Therefore, they allow their unconscious to project itself and voice some of their ‘unpopular points of view’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 20). Much like the conscious e-personality, the unconscious holds newfound power, a ‘proverbial third hand.’ Aboujaoude explains that the ‘third hand’ can ‘empower a person’ in front of a computer serving ‘as an incentive to become more assertive, effective online, and efficient offline as well’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 21). Because we become immersed when entering the internet, we become ‘different individuals’ and ‘unconsciously we take on a new personality’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 22), one that often holds no similarities to our ‘real-life selves.’ Aboujaoude suggests that this avatar or ‘person we become can be a conscious creation of our wild imaginations’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 22). As this new online individual becomes embedded into everyday life, the ‘new-self emerges unintentionally and unconsciously, through email, blogging, texting, message boards’ (Aboujaoude, 2011: 22). This again presents the shift that we now witness in our day-to-day life, our offline/private life becomes seeped in the virtual-reality of our digital existence.

It could be suggested that the unconscious mind is the force that drives the alter ego or ‘e-personality’. During the course of the *Gemella Live:Stream*, my response and behaviour was ‘unfettered’. Compared to my ‘normal’ self, my alter ego presented more confidence, assertiveness and arrogance. For example, when Gemella is asked if she was rich her response ‘To put it modestly – yes I am’, the confidence shown and lack of modesty heightens this difference for me. Another comment that shows her arrogance is, within a discussion about her makeup and her maid. She says ‘I let Te use all my old make up that’s a bit gone off due to the heat to practice so she can help me do my face’. As Aboujaoude suggested, my online alter ego as Gemella was effectively an ‘extension of self’ – though it must be said that she is the extension of

self that I do not like and would prefer to keep hidden. For that reason alone, it is important that by performing her, I am able to offer a critique of the lifestyle of privileged white expatriate women.

The 'Internet Ego' and 'White Saviour' complex

As noted by Van Dijck, the 'well-connected user' seeks to be constantly attached to their 'followers' or 'friends' on various social media platforms such as, Facebook and Instagram. This tends to enhance the need for documentation; photos seem to be a necessity at every 'offline' social event, every holiday or birthday etc. Our ever-growing 'Internet Egos' are conscious of how they want to be perceived and have become obsessed with the need for validation and acknowledgement, popularity or approval. One satirical Instagram, 'Barbie Saviour' (discussed in Chapter One), uploads images of a Barbie doll photo-shopped into an African setting. The description box of the Instagram profile states 'It's not about me... but it kind of is' (Barbie Saviour, 2017: online). This highlights the subject of critique: that is, the many Internet Egos that flaunt their privilege or 'self-congratulatory' experiences of doing 'good deeds' to generate a greater following.

Another parodic Instagram account that plays with the 'popularity principle' is that of 'Louise Delage,' a 25-year-old French model whose account has over 111k followers. The photos uploaded depict a generic stereotype of white privilege that appears across social media platforms. Delage is presented attending beach parties, going on boat trips, as well as mini holidays amidst her very busy work and social life. To most users of social media platforms who follow their favorite celebrities and other 'rich kids of Instagram,' these photos do not look typical; in fact, they portray the stereotypical 'perfect lifestyle' of someone in their mid-twenties.

However, in September 2016, a final post was uploaded to the account: a short video that states that the account was fake, setting out to deliver an important message. Created by Parisian ad agency, BETC, in conjunction with Addict Aide's, 'Like My Addiction Campaign' the Instagram account apparently aimed to recognize the 'hidden issues of alcoholism and addiction' (Driscoll, 2016: online). Prior to this last upload, the account presented only very subtle hints of alcohol addiction. For instance, a wide pan photo of Delage in a retro lounge (See Figure 7) fails to make the large glass of red wine on the coffee table the center of attention, nor can you pinpoint a half empty wine glass in a the close up photo of Delage in her room (See Figure 8) with an array of books crowding the shelves behind her.



Figure 7 Louise Delage Instagram



Figure 8 Louise Delage Instagram

Much like the Barbie Savior account, the captions and hashtags that accompany the photos are crucial to understanding them – for example, Delage captions figure 8: 'Qu'est-ce qu'on fait ce soir? #bedtime or #wildnight ? #chill #parisenaout' (Delage, 2016: online). (The question in French asks, 'What are we doing tonight?') It could be suggested that generic postings and the use of the hashtag

can have an effect on the amount of likes and followers generated by a social media account. Obtaining more followers than actual friend's offline heightens that some will have followed an Instagram or other social media account for its content. Issues like this furthers what Delage presents by almost encouraging her alcohol abuse through the amount of likes she obtains on each photograph. BETC president and creative director Stéphane Xiberras Paris said that,

We hoped for more followers to take notice of Louise's behaviour.... There were a few people who sensed the trap—a journalist among others, of course—but in the end, the majority just saw a pretty young girl of her time and not at all a kind of lonely girl, who is actually not at all that happy and with a serious alcohol problem. (Paris in Driscoll, 2016: online)

This allows us to consider the how our subconscious behaviour can be taught to correspond to a set of society ideals that include, having a highly active social life, where drinking excessively and partying is 'acceptable'. Although the BETC campaign was positive in generating a following, one that were led to believe a certain lifestyle of an individual online. Paris comments that it also presented a deeply alarming fact that, '[S]ometimes it seems like in this era, the more people stage their ideal life on social media, the more that serves to hide a not-so-ideal reality' (Paris in Driscoll, 2016: online). Considering Gemella amid Paris' comment allowed me to contemplate her presentation and efficacy on social media. Could her ability to heighten privilege on social media by not actually obtaining a life offline affect the way many people consider their following and the need to present the ideal life? Moreover, is this the way many are now opting to 'cheat' Instagram and its algorithm in a bid to receive the most 'likes'?

In February 2017, Facebook hosted the 'Machine Learning @ Scale' event. The event brought together a variety of computing engineers to discuss the latest

technical advances within the dimensions of social media field. Thomas Dimson of Instagram presented a talk, which explained the process of creating and implementing Instagram's 'feed algorithm'. Within his presentation he 'notes all the crucial metrics of how Instagram defines relevance, the measures which dictate how content is ordered in the feed' (Dimson in Hutchinson, 2017: online). Detailed in an article by Andrew Hutchinson, Dimson explains that one of the key factors considered within this process, which consequently filters which posts show up higher in your feed revolve around,

- People whose content you like
- People you direct message
- People you search for
- People you know in real life. (Dimson in Hutchinson, 2017: online).

Although Dimson does not confirm these to be the main factors within Instagram's algorithm, it does propose that engagement is heavily considered within their progression of the application. Dimson comments that this year (2017) they have worked on creating an algorithm to highlight the content users are mostly likely to engage with. (This being based upon the factors listed above.) This is not to say that the use of the hashtag does not affect what is found throughout your feed but it does heighten the chances of a wider social network finding your photos if engagement from other users pushes your post higher up the news feed of others. This allows me to consider how engagement could also be aligned with popularity, in particular the gratification of wanting to be 'liked'. Users will stop at nothing to achieve the best 'selfie' or capture the most 'picturesque' landscape. In some cases, many opt to use Instagram to parade elements of their wealth, for example *The Rich Kids of Instagram*, television show documents various millionaires' journeys of how they go about

detailing their lives on the social media platform. This is not to say that other people like particular photos because of someone flaunting their privilege – they may like the photo as a friend or due to the admiration of a beautiful vista. Again this reinstates the engagement possibility of the algorithm feed, the more people engaged the higher the interaction.

More recently new supporting applications created by Instagram, such as Boomerang and HyperLapse have provided the opportunity to upload something more substantial than a ‘10 second video’ or still image. Founded in 2014, HyperLapse creates ‘time-lapse’ styled videos through a smartphone camera. The app enables you to film up to 42 minutes of footage which can be increased in speed or set to slow motion. Boomerang, also launched by Instagram in 2014, allows users to create shoot videos through a shutter motion; this captures movement, allowing a short video to emerge that loops the shutter continuously. It could be suggested that both applications allow you to make a slightly longer form of GIF, which is a type of animated photo made by combining several photos into one single GIF file. They are used by many on social media to express an emotion or a particular catch phrase.

The GIF first appeared 30 years ago (as of 2017) however, Klint Finley notes in his article ‘The GIF Turns 30: How and Ancient Format Changed the Internet’ that, it has in recent years been considered a ‘phenomenon’. Social media applications such as, Twitter and Facebook, now obtain a GIF button. Being so embedded into these platforms the GIF is now considered ‘part of day-to-day digital communication’ (Finley, 2017: online). Within the article Finley refers to, Adam Leibsohn, the COO of the GIF search engine Giphy, who refers to the GIF as an ‘insurgent format’, of this he comments,

It enables people to publish moving images in places they weren’t necessarily intended, like someone’s signature on a forum. The easiest,

simplest thing wins, he says. As people realised they could stick tiny, looping bits of animation into web-based conversations, GIFs became a new form of expression. Clips of people clapping, slamming their heads on a desk, or dancing replaced text, and new, more artistic GIFs emerged as a form of micro-entertainment. The rise of smartphones made this form of visual communication all the more appealing. (Leibsohn in Finley, 2017: online)

With the use of the GIF now incorporated into in-text conversations we have been given the opportunity to, replace our short hand expressions such as, ‘OMG’ ‘WTF’ and ‘LOL’ with a GIF that can display or rather further express the emotion we are experiencing.

The Gemella GIF Series focuses on using the Boomerang application to formulate a style of resistance through practice. The GIFs display Gemella in a variety of different locations; the idea behind each was to highlight her lifestyle. Through this I was able to document her personality, her placement, her style and most importantly how she is able to express an emotion. My hope for this element of practice was for the viewers to understand how Gemella was responding to resistance by her opts to engage with signifiers along the costume and connectivity continuum. Throughout the creating process, I engaged with the use of signifiers. One in particular, which operated throughout most of the GIFs, was location. This allowed me to consider how various different locations, be it ‘high profile’ spots like a luxury beach resort or a high-end shopping mall could be a trigger to the embodiment process of a famous expatriate women. Within this process I would evaluate how the use of location could either enhance or diminish the possibility of an alter ego/ Gemella being believed on social media applications, or through an alternative to a still photograph.

These GIFS (or rather, stills taken from them) in both figures 9 and 10 document how the location helped me to formulate a perception to an audience.

For example, figure 9 presents Gemella in a white robe in a hotel room. In this case the signifiers relate closely to location but also relate closely to costume acting as a signifier for me to enhance the imagery of location. Other GIFs such as, figure 10 present Gemella through the use of costume and makeup, without location being the focal point. By wearing my own clothing slightly differently, for example matching different colours and styles together, I was able to channel an internal process of recognising I was trying to be someone different, without location always having to enhance my meaning through each GIF.

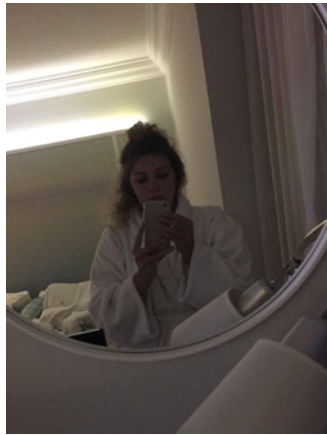


Figure 9 Gemella challenging location



Figure 10 Gemella Valuing Costume

Please view appendix C *The Gemella Gif series*

Overall the GIF process allowed me to understand that Gemella could be multi-purposeful through performance. For example, Gemella could heighten her privilege and believability by relating and interacting with location. Some of the GIFs I created do not even present Gemella in them. They are of various locations of beautiful vistas or busy city centres. They give the illusion that it is somewhere she would be spending time.

The Ego in V'logging and Instagram

One of the most significant Internet platforms, which Van Dijck identifies with the new layer of connectivity, is YouTube. Founded in 2005, YouTube is a global broadcasting website, which allows its users to upload their own video, view other 'Youtubers' videos, subscribe to channels, as well as, like, share and comment. This platform originally focused mainly on music artists, uploading their latest singles. However, as the rise in social media began, so did the number of users of the social media platform for 'V'logging' (Video-blogging). The term 'V'logging' is used to describe an individual who creates a filmed 'blog,' rather than uploading text online.

YouTube is now home to several home grown celebrities such as Miranda Sings (Colleen Ballinger), Sprinkle of Glitter (Louise Pentland) and Zoella (Zoe Sugg).

Zoe Sugg, better known by her pseudonym Zoella, launched to stardom in 2009 with a little help from online blogger and YouTube celebrity 'Sprinkle of Glitter'. The pair originally invested time in creating blog pages on the social platform 'blogger.com' where they became friends. Many followers suggested that both 'bloggers' should begin creating YouTube make-up tutorials and shopping haul videos. The term 'haul' is used by V'loggers to document various items of clothing, jewellery or technology that have been bought from a particular shop. Zoella and Sprinkle of glitter are best known for their hauls from highstreet brands such as Primark and Asos. With these videos proving very successful, she launched 'Daily V'logs.' Zoella's 'About Me' section on her still active blog page reads,

Once Upon A Time, In February 2009, after indulging in various other Beauty Blogs as a way to read up on the latest goings on in the Beauty world, I decided to join in on one very boring evening, and "Zoella" was born. (Sugg, 2017: online)

Zoella's blogging channel explores a range of topics she wants to share with her readers, mainly expressing her love for photography, make up, hair and beauty. Before long, the Zoella blog page incurred a small following that gradually built to also include two YouTube channels 'Zoella' and 'MoreZoella,' as well as an Instagram, Twitter and Facebook account. As this following has grown, so have her efforts to make the V'log and Instagram posts ever more enticing. The videos, although still showing a carefree, fun 24-year-old, sometimes seem to derive from 'analytics'. Analytics is a newfound feature for many social media users, especially on YouTube and Facebook. On pages for businesses or in Zoella's case a fan based 'like' profile, individuals can now view their page's progress. On both Facebook and YouTube these

analytics detail peak time and activity. They suggest the best time to post or advertise and give the option to pay to ‘boost’ your post, meaning that the post is ‘guaranteed’ to reach more people in your area. Moreover, the analytics also encourage celebrities to consider how appealing their ‘tagline’ is for their videos. Just like a newspaper headline these taglines can be used to capture attention of the audience and do not always highlight the entire content shown in a V’log. Furthermore, Aboujaoude states that, the ‘online avatar’ often ‘nicely complements the actual person’ (2011: 20), like ‘Miranda Sings,’ Zoella’s ‘offline personality’ is also controlled by her ‘online self’. This is due to the attention she receives whilst out in public, giving press conferences, ensuring that she has enough footage for a daily V’log, as well as making sure she has enough time to edit, and upload the video by the time that has been promised to her viewers.

In an article titled ‘Zoella Sugg, online queen: followed by millions but “cripplingly shy”’ (Ellis-Peterson, 2014), Zoella is described as the ‘online rival’ of music sensations Beyoncé and Taylor Swift. Adam King, who manages many ‘high profile YouTube channels’ comments that the reason Zoella is so successful ‘lies in her accessibility’ (King in Ellis-Peterson, 2014: online). He continues:

What is unique about YouTube as a platform is that it strips away a lot of the artifice. The one thing people really respond to on YouTube is people being personable, and so when have that kind of connection with your audience people who are watching Zoella feel like she’s a friend, she feels accessible. (King in Ellis-Peterson, 2014: online)

Considering Carl Jung’s concept of the ‘persona’/ ‘mask’ which represents the complex relationship between ‘individual consciousness and society’, then Zoella’s mask ensures a ‘definite impression upon others’ (Jung in Storr, 1983: 94). Now, much later in her career and following her rise of fame, the mask may hide aspects of her

personality that she no longer wants to share with ‘followers’, disguising ‘the true nature of the individual’ (Jung in Storr, 1983: 94). As Jung expresses, the individual is based on upon a series of ideals that have been collated with how we should act in society. Zoella’s following would expect nothing less than for her to ‘play the role of a person in a flawless manner’ (Jung in Storr, 1983: 94). As an ‘Internet ego’, Zoella has not only become a digital sensation but also a trade mark. Due to her V’logging successes, Zoe is now known also for her book series *Girl Online* and her makeup and beauty product range *Zoella Beauty* and *Zoella Lifestyle*. It could be suggested that, her digital existence has now impacted her offline persona, especially with how she chooses to embrace being ‘off-platform’. Recently she made history in the UK for ‘being the first YouTube cover girl of *Company* magazine. She’s also appeared on popular UK TV Shows such as *This Morning* and *Loose Women*’ (thinkwithGoogle: online). This could suggest that, the life Zoe shows on her Zoella YouTube channel truly resembles her offline persona. Although this is not doubted, I do believe that the person Zoe once was when she started YouTube in 2009 has changed slightly to keep up with the demand of her ever-growing following and trading mark. The difference between Zoella and Gemella can be seen through the fact that, Gemella does not have a following nor does she hold any form of stardom, it is all a hoax. Through performances, Gemella is able to negotiate her mask to either portray the individual flawlessly, or in most cases how she opposes this. As a form of critique, I have been able to imitate and draw on certain aspects of Zoella’s social media broadcasts. Noting how she chooses to address her audience has been crucial in teasing out the relationship Gemella could have with her own audience. This further highlights how Gemella is ultimately meant as a satirical character posing as one of them, when she’s not really one of them at all.

Attempting Liveness through Practice: *The Gemella Live: Stream*

At the beginning of *Gemella Live: Stream*, introduced earlier in the chapter, I could be seen sitting in front of my laptop's camera; a spotlight facing me illuminates my extremely bronzed face and blonde hair, and I prepare myself for the livestream (which those watching online would not know was intended to be projected onto a screen in an adjacent performance studio, to its primary audience). An image of Ho Chi Minh City's skyline has been blown up as a backdrop, and stuck behind me. This performance intended to disorientate its live audience by examining the power of the audience /actor relationship through social media. The potential of 'resistance' in the concept of 'liveness' played a crucial role in underpinning the spatial positioning and manipulation of the performance's audiences.

Philip Auslander (2008) proposes that the energy created when watching a live performance focuses closely on the connection created between an audience and the actor. He suggests that 'theatre and the mass media are rivals not partners' and that 'our current cultural formation is saturated with and dominated by, mass media representations' (Auslander, 2008: 1). It is here that Auslander could be referring to, 'mass media representations' become part of our identity. Echoing Sherry Turkle's suggestion that online identities are a 'cultural work in progress' (Turkle, 1995: 177), Auslander proposes that for liveness to take full effect, the individual must value the internet and its audience. *Gemella Live: Stream* attempted to challenge how the audience interacted with the 'live' aspect of the stream, for example, due to a slight delay of the live broadcast it was apparent that the audience in the adjoining room could hear Gemella speaking before it was relayed on the screen. Although this did not stop the questioning, the questions became more focused on the believability of what

they were witnessing. For example, one viewer tweeted, ‘What time is the time in Vietnam?’ When Gemella responded that it was sometime in the evening the viewer was quick to tweet back, ‘then why is it still light outside?’ This held reference to the backdrop that presented a slightly overcast daytime view of the city.

‘Intelligence, Interaction, Reaction and Performance’ was a practice based research project by Susan Broadhurst, which, like my Gemella project, consisted of ‘a series of performances that utilise new technologies’ (Broadhurst, 2006: 141). *Blue Bloodshot Flowers* (2001) and *Dead East, Dead West* (2003) focused on the interaction of the physical and virtual through use of digital technology. Broadhurst considered how the concept of ‘consciousness’ can be embodied through digital and virtual space. She believes that the technological advancements used in the practice she has directed have resulted in ‘new liminal spaces [...] where there is a potential for a diverse creativity and experimentation’ (Broadhurst, 2006: 141). These ‘liminal spaces’ are situated on the ‘threshold’ of the physical and virtual, and as a result these tensions exist. Broadhurst notes that no body ‘escapes (re)presentation altogether’ (Broadhurst, 1999: 103), suggesting that the virtual body ‘inscribes its presence and absence in the very act of its performance’ (Broadhurst, 2006: 141). This presents ‘gaps and spaces in its wake’ that she implies as ‘tension filled spaces’ that allow for new elements of practice to emerge (Broadhurst, 2006: 141). Operating these notions within the *Gemella Live: Stream*, allowed me to consider the gaps created within her performance. These gaps focused on how effective the practice was at allowing ‘Gemma’ to leave and Gemella to emerge, which created a liminal space as Broadhurst implies. This is due to Gemella fluctuating along a threshold where tension can be found by encroaching into a virtual realm whereby she doesn’t belong and the critique she is also implementing onto a particular society.

Blue Bloodshot Flowers was a scripted movement piece, which focused on the ‘real time’ interaction between two characters: Elodie Berland (a dancer in the space) and Jeremiah (an avatar), as well as between Jeremiah and the audience. Jeremiah was ‘[...] programmed to react to certain stimuli with specific facial emotional expressions, he can also demonstrate random behaviour that can be disruptive during a performance’ (Broadhurst, 2007: 144). Broadhurst comments that ‘[...] we had no way of controlling his behaviour, which he learned as he went along’ (Broadhurst, 2007: 145). There was a similar ‘analogue’ element in *Gemella Live: Stream*. Although Gemella could only react to the questions she was asked throughout the live stream, there was a ‘through-line’, which corresponded to the signifiers in the space. My through-line was created by my own acknowledgement that I was Gemella, my costuming, the set-up of the space (a spotlight, the backdrop and a live stream camera), as well as the interaction through both digital platforms, provided an element of believability to signify with the process I was engaging with. According to Merleau-Ponty, ‘our body is not primarily *in* space; it is of it’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2002: 171). In this instance, both Jeremiah and Gemella are produced through their spaces. They are not representations; they co-exist and are understood as and through the combination of virtual and digital material that they create. This further illustrates the ‘gaps’ and ‘tensions’ that Broadhurst refers to within performance. For Gemella, this is why it is appropriate for her to be a critique of social media and the internet culture, as she only exists within it.

Critiquing (through) the Alter Ego

Marvin Carlson (1996) comments that the resisting performer should evaluate where their performance sits with its audience and needs to question how to ‘negotiate appropriation, display, and representation that is politically and socially responsible’

(Carlson, 1996:186). My intention through this element of practice (*Gemella Live Stream*) and within my further work is to evaluate my appropriation towards Gemella. Questioning how she can function as part of me but at the same time not be me. My hope is that the slight transformation between leaving Gemma and becoming Gemella would allow displays of privilege to be presented with ease. This can be seen through her neutrality that is presented through speaking so candidly (apparently) of her upbringing and current lifestyle. Positioning herself within the live stream as a high profile celebrity also displays a critique towards others who have become famous with aid of social media platforms i.e. Zoella, Miranda Sings, and Sprinkle of Glitter. Creating a resistant practice through Gemella is based on a representation of the expatriate society that I was once a part of. Her knowledge of living an expatriate life allows her to negotiate how she wants to represent that life but also her placement within it. Furthermore, the way Gemella attempts to convey her answers about herself suggests a slight resistance in engagement or rather ownership, of her political stance within the Vietnamese society. Through the *Gemella Live: Stream* she has chosen to be socially responsible for her engagement in society as a celebrity and an expat. It could be considered through my attempt to create a resisting performance/performer that the resistance was reflected in my attempt to tease out the tension within the practice.

As Carlson states, the ‘central concern’ no longer revolves around the performer, but is ‘rather the interplay of performer and public’ (Carlson, 1996: 186). Within my practice, this surrounds what could be considered as a lack of subtle moments of ‘believability’ through performer to its public. For example, believability could have instantly been hindered to some of the audience through the acknowledgement of the backdrop being a photo strategically placed behind me. Another element within the practice that could imply an attempt to resist believability

is through the echo of my voice being heard in the room, a signal to the audience that the performance was satirical and so meant as resistant.

The *Gemella Live: Stream* led me to reflect on the interplay of performer and public when placed on a digitized platform. I began to evaluate how signifiers may have been used to enhance elements of believability and in turn how this can formulate the connectivity continuum correctly. As noted earlier in the chapter, the signifiers used within *Gemella Live: Stream* correspond greatly to the connection she is attempting to achieve with her ‘fans’. To believe this, her appearance was crucial in my own acceptance that Gemella is a person. The use of a spotlight above in conjunction with layers of makeup illuminated a different face through the camera. This difference created a newfound confidence, a believability that was multi-purposeful. In one aspect, the believability was used to work through the tensions created through the resistance that was proposed within the performance and secondly, as a way to correspond with the signifiers.

Similarly, the *Gem[ella]* photography experiment furthered this approach towards tension as I continued to work through the process of creating/ developing an alter ego. Whilst in Canada I spent a total of 18 hours, over two days as Gemella. This resulted in two videos that imitated the formation and style of a video blog (V’log). These were not uploaded but shown as part of a humanities research talk in Canada. The V’logs engaged with the topics of resistance and liveness, questioning the believability of being in another setting, and ‘live’, rather than a printed backdrop (seen in the *Gemella Live: Stream*) and how this can further obscure an audience’s understanding of whether an online celebrity can be connected with its audience. Furthermore, these glitches and cracks that were presented through the analogue and the digital within the performance (voice echo, live stream delay, fake skyline) drew the audience’s attention to the critique throughout.

Please refer to Appendix D and watch *4* Hell* now

The first V'log, *4* Hell*, presents Gemella in a 'hotel room' (actually my university bedroom in Canada) voicing her frustrations about how a particular airline had allowed her to get onto the wrong flight, which meant she had arrived in Azerbaijan rather than Los Angeles (LA). What makes matters worse is the fact that upon arriving in Azerbaijan, Gemella learns that the airport has grounded all flights due to 'extreme' weather conditions. With the airport unsure when the next flight to LA will be, they send Gemella to wait out the storm in a four star hotel. The V'log was created within the first three hours of the 18-hour V'log embodiment process. As you can see throughout the V'log, there are moments when the 'mask' isn't fully hiding 'Gemma'. There are still moments of hesitation where I/Gemma am almost laughing at the hilarity of the story coming out of my mouth, or even more so laughing at my ability to be Gemella. This V'log took several 'takes', it meant working through the motions of the storyline, where the more I began to accept this, the more ease I felt when transitioning into Gemella. It was intended through *4* Hell* to attempt a resistance through the tensions and gaps that could be seen through the V'log. These could be found through my acknowledgement of location. Although, it is mentioned throughout the V'log that Gemella is in a hotel in Azerbaijan, which she describes to be 'awful'. What we see of the room does not replicate that of a typical hotel room. The walls were painted a mint green colour, the window is covered by a thin blind which draws attention to the butterfly stickers on the window and beyond that a very faint outline of Windsor's Ambassador Bridge. It is through these hints that I attempted to create a technique through a form of juxtaposition of location, to indicate to my

audience that I am Gemella and not Gemella just as I am not in Azerbaijan but I am in Windsor.

Please view Appendix E and watch *#PASSPORTPROBS*

#PASSPORTPROBS was the last V'log filmed in my time spent as Gemella in Windsor. The V'log was intended as a continuation *4* Hell* telling her story across two days as she attempts to continue her trip to LA. My decision to make two separate videos was to highlight an aspect of V'logging called, 'Daily V'logging'. Many well-known YouTube stars often upload these types of V'logs, they highlight everything they've done that day and their plans for the rest of the week. Often these intertwine, as they will refer back to something that has happened in a previous V'log. My intention through *#PASSPORTPROBS* was to create a daily V'log that related to the classic tropes and conventions that are often portrayed through these YouTube celebrities. Although the V'log presents Gemella, it also provides a critique on this now generic form of documentation. *#PASSPORTPROBS* presents a rather irritated Gemella, attempting to come to terms with the fact that she is currently stuck in Windsor, Ontario. Using her front facing camera on her phone, Gemella begins the V'log by explaining her current situation, and most importantly how and why she is in Windsor, Ontario. This leads to a conversation about how she had decided to hire a car to head across the border to Detroit to then catch a plane to LA. However, upon showing her formal identification the staff of the car rental shop, do not believe the passport ID to match the person. Gemella then goes off on a tangent about how she couldn't believe they didn't think she was British because she had an American accent. Shortly after this, she ends the V'log abruptly as she plans to figure out what to do with her time in Windsor. This tangent displaying her current dilemma is important within this V'log

for several reasons. Firstly, it creates a resistance, with the focus on Gemma and Gemella, the notion of, 'she is me, but isn't me' is essential in understanding that Gemella is teasing out the flaws behind what she is presenting. Moreover, this also identifies that others do not believe she is a 'real' person.

In terms of critiquing, Gemella is performing an analysis of the stereotypical tropes of YouTube V'loggers in particular, Zoella and Sprinkle of Glitter. Although there is no reference to either of them throughout the performance the style in which it is filmed replicates many of Sprinkle of Glitter's Daily V'logs where she's often using a front facing camera as she runs around to complete errands whilst delving into little stories about her day or dilemmas she's encountered. Lastly, I believe Gemella's tangent within the V'log really demonstrated her 'performance' and behaviour, which also highlights the stages of embodiment throughout the video. Through her unprecedented behaviour we witness the gaps of liminality. By the end of the video I truly believed every word I was saying. Unlike the *Live: Stream* and *4* Hell*, she was not playing with the location of character, but was questioning her acceptability within a society outside of Vietnam.

Whilst making these V'logs, I was also studying Canadian Theatre History. It was within this class that I was made aware of how identity plays a crucial role in pinpointing the foundations of Canadian history, in particular how one should define national identity in Canada. This can be seen heavily through works of Canadian playwrights from 1867 to present day. The postcolonial era has shaped many playwrights works to hold notions of liminality, diaspora and alterity, often leading to plays written and performed bilingually, reflecting the country's constant fight to define what might constitute liminal identity in a divided culture. It became apparent throughout my time in Canada that my definition of an alter ego should consider

adapting a “hyphenated-identity”³, something that I found very normal in Canada. Many people will never profess to just be ‘Canadian’ but will have a ‘hyphenated identity,’ like ‘French-Canadian’ or ‘Irish-Canadian.’ Roberta Mock writes of Canadian identity in her article entitled ‘Globalisation’s Marginalia: Anglo-Canadian Identity and the Plays of Brad Fraser.’ She states that Fraser is:

Representing his vision of urban English Canada, international audiences who (consciously or not) feel their lives are marked by tensions and opportunities perceived to be inherent in the process of globalization at a specific historical moment. (2006: 86)

With this, I came to evaluate how Canada’s identity politics could lend itself within my own documentation of defining the term alter ego. Within practice, I have been able to acknowledge Gemella through the gaps and tensions she has caused. This could be valued as the liminality, posing a state of flux, the in-between of leaving one body and embodying another. As a form of critique, the alter ego – in particular Gemella – builds up through the tensions created through the strategies of successfully engaging on social media platforms. It is here I believe I should regard the process of ‘becoming’ an alter ego as a performed hyphen. I understand this as the space in-between leaving Gemma and reaching Gemella, acting as a performative technique that is reached within the process of the connectivity continuum. On one side of the continuum you have Gemma, on the other you have Gemella.

³ It must be noted here that I am not referring to ‘hyphenated-identity’ this term is used to relate or designate a person or group of mixed origin or identity. I will be using the term ‘hyphenated-identity’ as a term to describe the identity/nationality/persona that you imprint onto yourself.

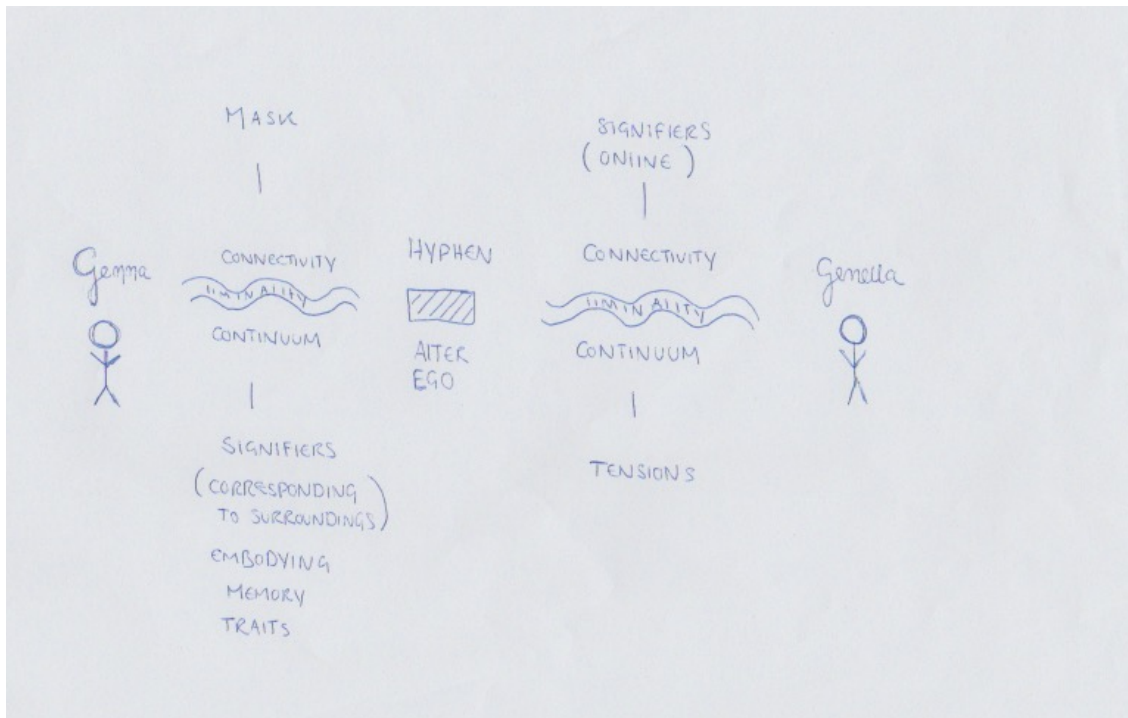


Figure 11 The Diagram of Hyphen and Connectivity Continuum

This diagram highlights different stages throughout the continuum and which signifiers hold most prominence throughout. For example, leaving Gemma, the signifiers that start the continuum relate closely to surroundings, memory and embodying identity, closer to Gemella the signifiers correspond to connectivity, online signifiers relating to social media platforms, and the individual's habits through connecting. In amongst this fluctuation tensions and gaps can be found to identify with the resistance and critique generated throughout this practice. The hyphen sits in the middle of this diagram highlighting a combination of both sets of signifiers with the notion of liminality flowing through. By obtaining a performed hyphen along the connectivity continuum we are able to acknowledge the relationship between creating and performing the alter ego and performing and critiquing. This as a process allows us to acknowledge where resistance can be created.

Chapter Conclusion

Chapter One highlighted that an embodiment process could be formulated through the acknowledgment of the psychoanalytic theory in particular, the understanding of the unconscious and the application of the mask. Moreover, this considered how embodiment could be completed within performance through Michael Kirby's (1972) Costume Continuum. However, throughout this chapter, the considerations of digital platforms and their use to develop an online avatar have allowed me to comprehend how this embodiment process can be enhanced. This development can be found through a new continuum, one that furthers Kirby's theorization but places it amongst a digital spectrum, this being the 'connectivity continuum'. As noted within this chapter, this particular continuum presents a manifesto of research strategies brought together throughout this research project in a hope to finalize a performative and functional definition of the term 'alter ego'. As noted in the diagram above (Figure 11), the continuum considers the mask, and both digital and physical signifiers. These correspond to what each individual believes can relate to a particular aspect of their own embodiment process. Furthermore, by using this continuum the individual can now gauge how and when they believe they have reached the hyphen, meaning they have mastered how to connect to the unconscious and visualize the signifiers.

Through practice, especially the *Gemella Live:Stream* and the *Gemella V'log* series I have been able to discuss and negotiate how habits on social media can enhance an individual's online personality. I have negotiated this through how I opted to use signifiers to aid my embodiment process. For example, privilege and notions of my expatriate lifestyle were prioritised as the main signifiers that connected closely with Gemella being placed on a digital platform. Performing across such a large digital

spectrum led me to understand that the individual/ online avatar, had to be more versatile and often representation on social media had to correspond to a set of ideals, the embodiment process required more online. Online you have to prove yourself; believability can be hindered if a network of people can track your mistakes. As discussed earlier in this chapter, representation on social media suggests you must play the role of a person in a flawless manner. The combination of live and digital performance has enabled me to draw attention to the role a person may play online. Most importantly it has allowed me to make explicit connections to the ‘hyphen’ between Gemma and Gemella

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to establish a more complex understanding of what is meant by the term alter ego and to assess its functions and contributions to performance. As a practitioner, my methodological approach has seen me creating and developing an alter ego as well as performing and critiquing through my alter ego. This approach to practice has required me to be ‘mixed modal’, meaning I have reflected and critiqued the outcomes of my practice, which have often been very personal due to the nature of alter egos.

As the practice is linked very closely to my childhood, this has often been quite a challenge. However, I have considered this to be a process of self-discovery, which has affected how I feel about my upbringing. Gemella is a construction of the expatriate lifestyle I acquired and witnessed and often resented whilst living overseas. This research has heightened the complexity of my coming to terms with this. Yet, my hope is that it will also provide an understanding to others who may question or recognise the traits of their own ego, or who want more clarity about how an alter ego may operate on a live or digital performance platform. In this conclusion, I will highlight my findings in relation to the research questions proposed in the introduction of my thesis. And finally, I will discuss the decisions and purpose of the final performance element of this thesis, *Gemella Live: Stream 2.0*.

Throughout this research enquiry, the foundations for understanding an alter ego have related closely to psychoanalytic theory, most importantly, Freud’s and Jung’s approaches to the individual’s unconscious mind. I believe that Jung’s idea of

the mask acts as a significant feature when performing an alter ego. The mask is used to formulate and present an alternative individual, one that can make a good impression towards others, and could successfully conceal traits that may hint at revealing their 'true' nature. For this to be achievable in practice, one must firstly evaluate how connected they are to their unconscious thoughts. For me this wasn't so difficult, I would often find myself, especially later on in my practice having 'Gemella moments.' These 'moments' were where I developed awareness of the techniques I had acquired when making my alter ego, enabling me to access and acknowledge my unconscious thoughts. For the mask to take full effect within performance I believe a high level of embodied knowledge must be obtained. An alter ego is created when the unconscious shadow and mask is accepted as part of our conscious thoughts and enacted. It is this that I believe to be the most crucial process in formulating an alter ego. It involves accepting that we all hold dark aspects of our personalities, which prompts our conscious to resist what we believe to be our 'inferiorities'.

I believe that Gemella has always been part of me unconsciously. Now with a greater understanding of both Jung and Freud's theories I had been able to comprehend ways to reconnect with the mask that I had suppressed. These reconnections were often made through performance. As noted in Chapter Two, the first version of *Gemella Live: Stream* was an element of practice created in the early stages of my research enquiry. Using improvised hot seating technique, I was able to present a person that I thought was different from my every day self, and it prompted questions surrounding how I could maintain this? The answer was to detach myself completely, emptying out as much of my conscious thought process as possible. From then, any questions I answered as Gemella were achievable through my acceptance/validation that Gemella was coming from 'me'; this allowed my unconscious thoughts to emerge as my now conscious ones.

Furthermore, Kirby's analysis of costume acting as a signifier has allowed me to comprehend work of other performers and artists as well as my own practice through a slightly different approach. His idea of the 'costume continuum' helped me to understand how Lois Weaver and Colleen Ballinger are able to fully embody their alter egos by identifying difference through costume. As noted in my first chapter, for Ballinger and Weaver to 'become' their alter egos they are 'not acting' but performing their 'specific identifications' which operate as a form of detachment through the use of costume. I believe that in watching this form of 'not acting', we may be able to acknowledge that the alter ego is part of them, but at the same time, not them. Kirby's analysis of the costume continuum prompted me to consider the use of the 'symbolic signifier' within the embodiment process of the alter ego and this saw me using various elements of clothing that I associated with the privilege, personal experience and memories of my upbringing. Once my body 'symbolised' meanings and connotations in this way, I felt as though I was performing along a continuum, responding to the 'specific identification' of a white, privileged expatriate women.

Watching Tammy WhyNot and Miranda Sings, I believe their costumes over compensate for the stigma surrounding identity, and therefore heighten the satirical nature of their performances as alter ego. Much like elements of my own practice, both WhyNot and Sings have taken elements of their past and have channelled them through costumes that enables them to perform their 'selves' differently. Secondly, I believe that although you can satirize something, you can still create empathy for it. Within my work as Gemella, my original *Gemella Live: Stream* focused a lot on my upbringing and lifestyle that I acquired whilst living overseas. Although this pokes fun at and acts almost as a rejection of the expatriate society I was a part of, it is still a very important milestone within my actual life.

Within this thesis I have discussed how social media can act as a way to heighten an individual's personality traits, or the ones they choose to project. Colleen Ballinger generated her alter ego through YouTube; she would manipulate the platform, presenting outrageous and often unusual video blogs (V'logs) on the Internet. Using the platform YouTube, Ballinger has used its characteristics and abilities to perform and extend what it is capable of. This in turn has pushed her own capabilities and has heightened Miranda Sings' profile. This intrigued her increasing audience, they were left to guess who she was beyond the camera. Originally, many believed Miranda Sings to be a 'real' person. It wasn't until her 'fans' were met with Colleen Ballinger's official YouTube did many connect Ballinger and Miranda Sings, as she had two accounts of equal following. By operating Gemella through her own social media accounts such as, Google Hangout (YouTube application), Twitter and Instagram I have similarly attempted to manipulate online users by engaging with and creating Gemella's audience digitally. She has her own lifestyle; her own opinions and can flaunt her privilege and wealth accordingly. It's been essential that, there were hints of Gemella that weren't as 'believable' and 'credible' through her social media postings and live streams. These hints were especially important, as I wanted the audience to know that she had been created to criticise the very thing she seems to present. In other words, if Gemella was to be too believable then the people who might follow her unthinkingly may misinterpret the attention she draws to her privileged position.

In elements of practice such as the *Gemella V'logs* and the *GIF series*, I have attempted critique white privilege and expatriation through what might be understood as resistant performance. (Terminology mentioned in the introduction of my thesis and chapter two). Deriving from Judith Fetterly's concept of the 'resisting reader,' resistance is a way of understanding 'a performance's meaning by reading against the

grain of stereotypes and resisting the manipulation of both the performance text and the cultural text that it helps to shape' (Fetterly in Aston, 1999: 83). The stereotype and variety of cultural texts that Gemella attempted to resist through performance focused on certain celebrity Instagram accounts. My attention to this stereotype focused on how Gemella's presence online could be used to satirize and critique the expatriate society. My attempt was to also mimic and critique particular celebrity Instagram profiles. Reflecting on the Gemella V'logs, I believe these elements of practice depict a resistance towards the culture and structure that Gemella resides in, one that formulates her. Through her discussion of her own fame and wealth within her descriptions of her so-called 'catastrophe of a life' she aims to further reinstate how she opts to go against the grain of stereotypes. Doing so, by how precise her characteristics and reasons are with regards to privilege and wealth.

Throughout my practice, my form of critique has attempted to work in similar ways to the Barbie Savior Instagram account. Although, Barbie Savior is not an alter ego, 'she' does satirise the white saviour complex, in a way that might be considered 'resistant'. As in my Gemella work, elements of humour and satirically mocking tag lines accompany the photos to provide an assurance to the audience that as a creator I am using irony and sarcasm to poke fun at a particular lifestyle. Although the use of captions and hash tags were not prominent features throughout my practice, I would often channel this technique throughout the process. I would use satire surrounding my expatriate lifestyle as a way to highlight and expose the irony and topical issues within my work such as, wealth and privilege. This was intended to move my work forward by becoming critically self-reflexive and aware of privilege within my practice. Furthermore, this relates closely to the use of the mask and acknowledgment of the unconscious mind. Being able to adapt and merge interchangeably between the

conscious and unconscious thought process allows the mask to become loaded with satirical humour and irony.

The Gemella V'log series (4* *Hell and # PassportProbs*) and the *Gemella Gifs* attempted to critique both the documentation of privilege and the production of privilege through this documentation. My inspiration came from the expatriate women my mother knew; I was using these 'real' women to critique their lifestyle. Although resistant performance often refers to a generalisation of a stereotype that is then critiqued, my practice has revolved around how I am actually stereotyping the way these expatriate women present themselves on social media. To do so, I would take into account the traits they presented at various luncheons I attended. Noting how they spoke to one another, their gestures and particular mannerisms, I also reflected their Instagram profiles. A typical feed would show them posing in the middle of a busy Vietnamese market, helping with a charity or documenting a shopping spree. In other photos, there would be a bottle of wine or champagne in sight as the women posed at their 5* hotel luncheons or checked in at the trendiest beach resorts across Asia. It was my intention with *the Gemella GIF series* to replicate many of these displays of privilege while attempting to acknowledge and critique privilege in a satirical manner. It was my hope through Gemella audiences would recognise my practice as satire. One of the ways I made this evident to my audience was through the use of location. When using Instagram, the application allows you to pin any location to any photo, this feature became a parody within my practice. I was able to highlight the contradiction between what/where the photo was presented versus the location that was being pinned. For example, 'Roof Top Bar – Toronto' was pinned to a GIF of Gemella sitting with her back against a fence, no high-rise or cityscape in sight. I believe many

of the GIFs presented aspects of privilege, however the nature and use of GIFs within my practice didn't always signal critique as clearly as I had hoped.

Central to the formation of Gemella since the start of this research project has been the idea of 'cosmopolitanism' and its relationship to privilege in a globalised world. As Appiah notes, the terminology is used to describe being a citizen of the world or (cosmos). It now groups together a variety of constructs that may influence the individual such as, white privilege, the white saviour complex, and Assigned Expatriation and Self-Initiated Expatriation (AE/SIE). Like both Harvie and Appiah, I agree that cosmopolitanism should be considered a goal rather than an achieved state. It must be noted through my discussion of cosmopolitanism as a key terminology used and implemented within my practice that my findings and opinions can be contradictory.

For the most part, I believe cosmopolitanism to hold principles that are positive and aspirational, ones that empower and embrace differences, further highlighting that we are all citizens of the world. However, this is not to say that it does not hold some dark aspects. My contradiction within this terminology sits with my own need to critique and resist being a cosmopolitan. I believe through practice I have attempted to comprehend a balance between the positive and negatives connotations in particular, my experience with acquiring unearned privilege and status overseas. In a 2006 *Mother Jones* article, Appiah depicts my ambivalence with this term. He states that key things associated with cosmopolitanism revolve around 'global concern – the acceptance that we're all responsible for the human community, which is the fundamental ideal of morality' (Appiah, 2006: online). Obtaining a 'deeply liberal view', Appiah recognises a central understanding must revolve around a 'question of ethics to be the shaping of social world in order to give each person the chance to

make a life of significance to himself or herself” (Appiah, 2006: online). Of which he regards identity politics as a crucial aspect of this, stating:

[...] [I]t’s important not to be captured by any one identity and not to feel that because you don’t have identity as a basis for communicating with other people that you shouldn’t communicate with them. (Appiah, 2006: online)

Much like Appiah notes I agree, that as individuals we should not be contained to just one identity. Yet I believe within my practice my cosmopolitan inflicted alter ego, is the part of my identity that I want to resist as it obtains many aspects of my old lifestyle that I find problematic.

The final practice element of my thesis, *Gemella Live Stream: 2.0*, attempts to bring together the elements of cosmopolitanism, globalisation and privilege in my performance of an alter ego. Up to this point, my practice has generated knowledge surrounding, critiquing through performance, creation of a mask, and use of the costume continuum, but although these have been discussed and theorised together, they have not yet been brought together in a ‘live’ performance form. They have acted more as progression marks throughout my thesis rather than a clear depiction of my research findings. Unlike the *Gemella Live: Stream*, where my performance focused on generating an alter ego, this performance aims to present my knowledge of my discussion and theorisations. The performance will highlight the development and changes that can be seen through the portrayal of Gemella’s personality and the demeanour she presents online. How she attempts to find a balance between presenting her privilege and also critiquing it, will be made evident by how effective her embodiment process is.

The purpose of this practice as a whole was to highlight various techniques that could be available to someone who wants to critique their own sense of entitlement

through live performance or on social media. This thesis has considered one particular way – that is, the performance of an alter ego that operates on a live and digital platform through social media applications. My reasons for choosing the *Gemella Live: Stream 2.0* as the summation of my research project lies with my feeling that it illustrates the embodied knowledge and understanding I have acquired. By opting to create an alter ego that's presence is only documented digitally, I believe that I have constructed a presence that tackles how social media can emphasise certain aspects of a person's lifestyle. My choice to operate live performance through a digitised live streaming platform is intended to highlight the construction of my practice.

Although I believe some elements of this research investigation have been achieved, there are still areas of this project that could lend itself to further enquiry, including how I could develop a more resistant practice through performance. To do so, I believe I need to pay more attention to building a stronger relationship between Gemella and her social media following. Although I had intended from the start of the project to do so, Gemella should and could have had a constant presence online over the entire period of the ResM project. In my early social media experiments as Gemella⁴ I was concentrating on creating an alter ego rather than critiquing privilege. If I were to take this practice forward, I would want to consider how a social media profile could operate resistantly over a period of time. This would allow for more consideration of the purpose of satire through performance, questioning whether the purpose of an alter ego's believability is necessary for one to be considered 'real' online.

In this thesis, I have suggested a development of Michael Kirby's models of continuum – that is, the 'Connectivity Continuum.' This operates when the individual performer is engaging and fluctuating through a set of symbolic signifiers, which

⁴ Please refer to Practice as Gemella Chapter One

correspond to technology and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. With further consideration and research, I feel that the connectivity continuum could help more deeply to work through the process of creating and defining an alter ego as the space in-between leaving 'Gemma and reaching Gemella'. In Chapter Two, I suggested that this in-between space might be understood as the hyphen. I believe both concepts lend themselves to further analysis and would contribute in establishing more ways to approach the term alter ego. Additional development could also arise from the application of Jung's idea of collective unconscious as a series of 'archetypes.' He implies that the Ego can be found amongst the archetypes of 'Shadow, Anima, the Animus, and the Persona,' all of which are described as having 'the most frequent and the most disturbing influence on the ego' (Jung in Storr, 1983: 91). If this is applied to the idea of the 'connectivity continuum', we might be able to consider a variety of ways that alter egos perform in digital spaces such as social media.

This leads, finally, to the matter of defining an alter ego. At the start of this project (and in the introduction to the thesis), my starting working definition proposed that an alter ego stemmed from where I felt I was not acting like myself. By bringing together a range of theories, a review of other creative practices and the reflection and development of my own practice, I believe the alter ego in performance to be best understood through techniques that try to access the unconscious mind and well-chosen symbolisers that are operating in unison. This has allowed me to consider the alter ego as a hyphen between the performer and what she has tried to repress, functioning and fluctuating along a range of continuums (acting/not-acting, costuming and connectivity). This doesn't mean that the original dictionary definition of an alter ego – possessing a secondary or alternative persona – should be discarded, but that this

in itself doesn't help us to understand why and how an alter ego might be created for performance and what this alter ego might achieve.

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